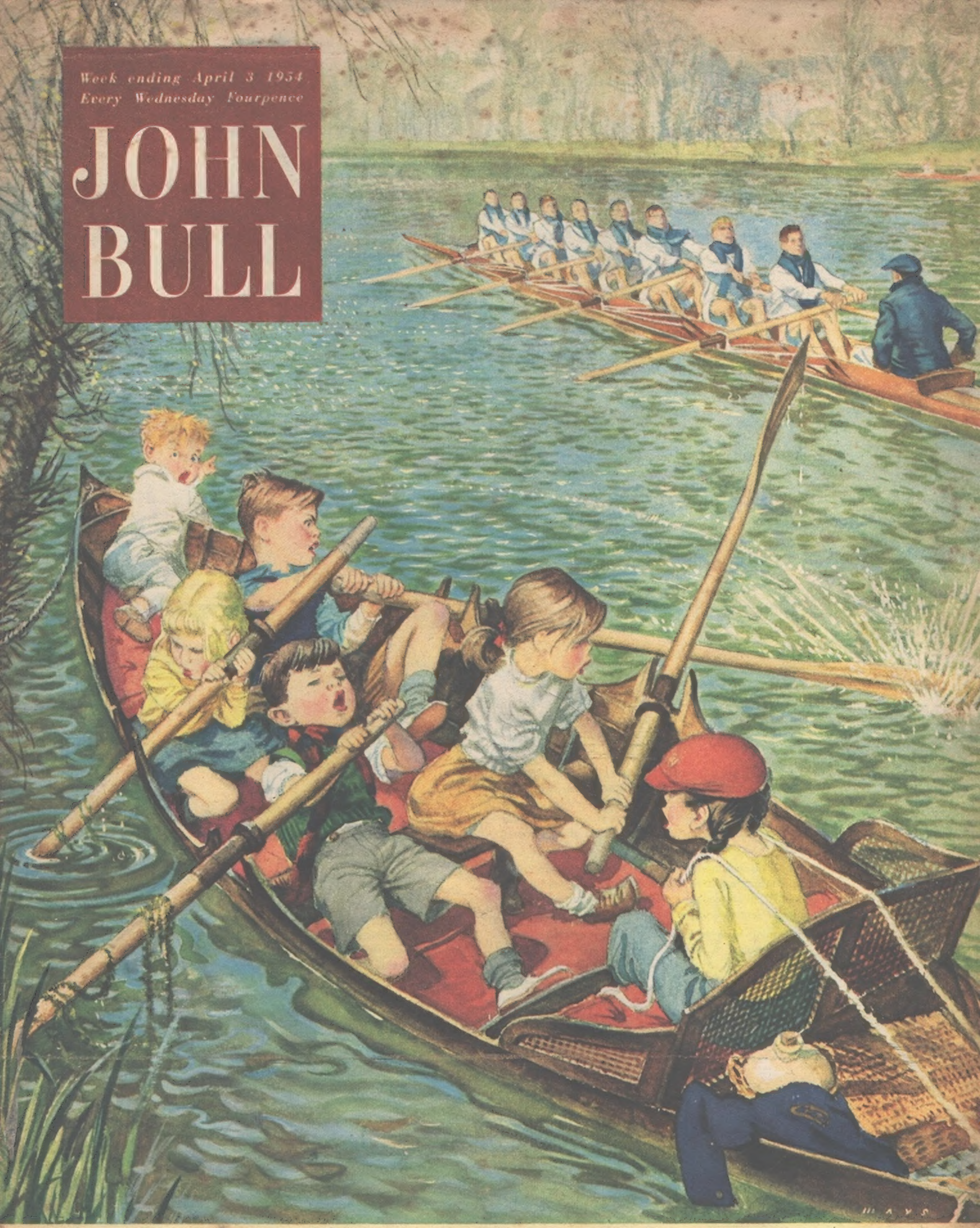
Week ending April 3 1954
Every Wednesday Fourpence

JOHN BULL



REACH FOR THE SKY

Paul Brickhill's inspiring story of

DOUGLAS BADER

. . . burning bright

SOME eight thousand miles from London lie the jungles of Malaya.

We, the British, are the people who brought to this ancient land of tiger and jungle a common law and order, who constructed railways and roads, pushed back the jungle, built towns and cities, developed the tin mines and introduced the rubber tree. We have made it one of the most important countries in the world.

The rubber plantations of Malaya, which now supply industry with an enormous volume of cultivated rubber, were begun from the Brazilian seeds shipped to Britain towards the end of the 19th Century and propagated in Kew Gardens.

Today Dunlop Malayan Estates Ltd. cultivates 80,000 acres, the largest rubber plantation property in the world under single control. It employs many thousands of Tamils, Chinese and Malays. They work for good wages and live in good houses. They have schools, hospitals, crèches, laundries, bus services, entertainments and temples.

This is an age of greatly differing ways of living. We have no reason to be too modest. The British way of life has brought to millions a new conception of living, a greater prosperity, a wider freedom. Whether we work alone or as colleagues in one of our great industries, such as Dunlop, we still have to finish the job we started — the creation of a common prosperity and a common wealth of work and happiness for all the peoples of the world.

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EDITORIAL

Mrs. Walker's dream

LIKE most of the population of Britain, Mrs. Phyllis Walker, of Pimlico, and her husband lived in a house which was often cold. Like twelve million other families they heated their rooms with coal fires—or tried to. As for hot running water, that was just a dream.

Unlike most dreams, Mrs. Walker's came true. She and her husband moved into Shelley House, one of Westminster City Council's new blocks of flats by the Thames. What delighted them most was the central heating and the hot water that was available day and night.

THE Walkers are pleased to pay 7s. 9d. extra for this heating and water in their present two-roomed flat, or 9s. 5d. for the three-roomed flat they will move into later this year. "It's always warm, with no trouble," says Mrs. Walker.

MRS. PHYLLIS WALKER
"It's always warm now"

Their comfort comes from utilizing waste—the steam from Battersea power station across the river.

When all 1,700 flats are occupied, the scheme, which cost £53,000 and needs £25,000 a year to run, will pay its way without subsidy. It is Britain's latest and best example of what engineers call district heating.

One expert, Mr. Donald Smith, who has installed several plants, says: "This country has the worst-heated and most smoke-polluted towns of any civilized nation.

"The total cost of heat and power a generation ago was three per cent of the national income. Today it is more than ten per cent. It will soon be twelve per cent. District heating is an outstanding way to economize."

IN Britain, the system was pioneered in 1911 by a Manchester firm. In 1920, another experiment was started at Dundee. The Dundee scheme is still going strong, but for twenty-five years Britain practically neglected district heating. Only recently have a few plants been installed.

There are several methods—a central boilerhouse, a waste steam plant from a large factory, or the adaptation of one of Britain's many obsolete power stations. All these methods can extract twice as much heat from a ton of coal as ordinary domestic fires.

YET the new satellite towns have no district heating. Fuel has to be carted to every house. When it gets there, somebody has to feed it to the fire. And even then it is much less efficient than piped heating—and it also creates smoke and dirt.

District heating is now general on new housing schemes in America, France, Scandinavia and Germany. It really is about time that we in Britain caught up.

THIS WEEK'S COVER

WHEN Douglas L. Mays was very young, one of his uncles kept a boat on the River Thames. "He was always much too nervous to allow us children to row in mid-stream," says Mays, "though he would sometimes let us have a go by ourselves—with an extra long painter tied safely to the bank." But the idea for this week's cover came when Mays saw a boat-load of girls "making an awful hash of it—as, boys know, girls always do."

REACH FOR THE SKY [illegible] DOUGLAS BADER

ANY QUESTIONS?

The countless thousands who regularly drink delicious 'Ovaltine' already know its value. For those who have not yet 'discovered' 'Ovaltine,' the following questions and answers may help to explain why 'Ovaltine' is the world's most popular food beverage.

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WHY IS 'OVALTINE' SO POPULAR AS A NIGHTCAP?

You'll know when you try it. Bedtime 'Ovaltine' has a soothing influence and helps you to relax, thus promoting the conditions favourable to restful, natural sleep.

WHY IS 'OVALTINE' SO ECONOMICAL?

Consider the high quality you get for what you pay. Only world-wide demand and exceptional manufacturing resources make possible 'Ovaltine' quality at such a low price.

REMEMBER that 'Ovaltine' is an original product—first in its field—the result of prolonged research by eminent dietitians. 'Ovaltine' still retains its leadership—its essential differences.

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* *It's Robinson's 'Patent' Barley*

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APRIL 3, 1954 VOL. 95 NO. 2492 PHONE: TEMPLE BAR 2468 GRAMS: HEROICALLY, WESTCENT, LONDON

FREE SPEECH

His wife was keen to drive

WHEN our new car arrived, my wife asked me to teach her to drive. I wasn't too happy about it at first, but she was so keen to learn that I gave in.

I was very patient with her. We kept to the quiet roads, and I helped with the gears and steadied the wheel as we passed cyclists. But after we had dented both nearside wings, we could see it was no good. For months my wife didn't mention driving. Then one evening, as soon as I got in, she called out: "Passed my test today—first try." The man at our local garage had told her that husbands are the worst driving instructors, and had offered to teach her himself. On her first day, she drove right through the busiest part of Sevenoaks. "*He* just told me what to do, and left me to do it," she said. "*You* fussed so much that I got flustered."—M. K., Kent.

A Girl's Age

WHEN going into town with my two little girls, I used to ask for "one and one half" tickets. Very often I received dubious looks from the bus conductors, and had to assure them: "No, the younger one is *not* three yet." Yesterday was her third birthday, and today I had to ask for "one and two halves." In a rather doubting manner the conductor asked: "Is the little one three already?" I assured him that she was, but when he gave me my tickets and change, he bent down to me and said quietly: "Here you are, lady—one and a half."—Mrs. W. Schroeder, Burham, Rochester, Kent.

Book Ploy

I HAVE found out how to get attention when assistants in shops or post offices keep me waiting while they talk to each other about their own affairs. If I have a book with me, I lean comfortably against the counter and start reading with obvious concentration and enjoyment. It works every time.—V. Westlake, Wood Street, near Guildford, Surrey.

Financial Year

I HAVE just received my bank statement. The bank charges for thirty-two transactions in the past twelve months are shown as £1 6s. This is in addition to the 2d. for every cheque issued. At no time during the period was my balance greater than £38. If the banks want more small accounts they will have to do better than this.—F., Birmingham.

The banks of England and Wales have no published scale of charges, says the Banking Information Service. Charges are a matter for negotiation between the individual customer and his bank manager, taking into consideration the services he requires. The 2d. per cheque is to pay for the government stamp; the cheque slip itself is supplied free. The Scottish banks have a published scale. They charge 6d. for each cheque drawn on a current account, but not less than 10s. per half-year. This charge is reduced by a half-yearly allowance of 6d. per month for each complete £100 of the lowest balance in the account during each month. The allowance may in no case exceed the total charge for the period. This scale is subject to variation when special services are required.

Sudden Death

MY grandfather, who lived in Beddgelert, Caernarvonshire, used to walk with a friend over the mountains to the quarries at Blaenau Ffestiniog. One morning he was ill, and the friend made the journey alone. He never arrived at the quarry. A search party found his skeleton picked clean on the mountain two miles away. The rats had got him. My grandfather used to say that they migrated ("Free Speech," March 13) in their thousands from one quarry to another. If a man stood perfectly still, they would never attack him; but if he moved and made a rat squeal, the whole horde would fall upon him straightway. Once Grandfather saw rats attack a cow and devour it completely.—Rev. E. J. Lloyd, Portmadoc, Caernarvonshire.

Beginning next week . . .

BHOWANI JUNCTION

by JOHN MASTERS

See page 20

Time For Bed

I TEACH a class of eleven- and twelve-year-olds. Recently, I asked each child this question: "What time did you go to bed last night?" I found that one child had gone to bed before eight o'clock, sixteen between eight and nine, eighteen between nine and ten, three between ten and eleven, and one after eleven. It seems that only one child in my class is getting sufficient sleep. Many other teachers have told me that their pupils stay up late to watch television, go to late cinema performances or stay out on the streets.—J., Derbyshire.

Children of eleven and twelve are still growing, says a doctor. Sleep is therefore very important to them. While eight o'clock may be a little early, nine should be the limit for children of this age.

Lift Drill

IN John May's article on Tom Warlum, the lift service mechanic (John Bull, March 13), it is stated that Warlum once arrived in the nick of time to prevent two firemen dismantling the brake of a lift in which a number of men were trapped. The London Fire Brigade attends hundreds of such incidents every year, and no fireman in his right mind would take that action. We don't waste time finding the cause of the stoppage; we invariably make the lift safe by withdrawing the fuses, and then use hand gear to bring it to the most convenient landing.—J. Skinner (Sub Officer, London Fire Brigade), Coles Green Road, Cricklewood, London, N.W.2.

. . . Although it sounds very dramatic, the lift could not "plunge down the shaft out of control" because there are a number of ingenious

Continued on page 6

"Smooth" is the key word says **GIGLI**

"What has always turned fine singers into great singers is perfect voice control," says this greatest of all living tenors. "Control that is unforced yet complete. Yes, smooth *is the word for it."*

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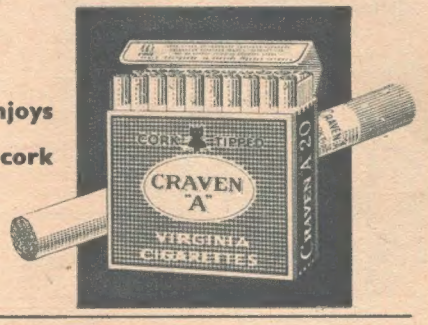

Smooth **to the lips... *Smooth* to the taste... *Smooth* to the throat**

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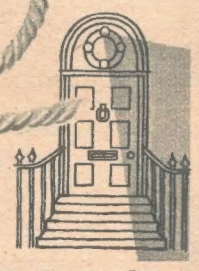

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A WATNEY BREW

FREE SPEECH

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

safety devices apart from the brake. My colleagues resent the implication that they are liable to aggravate a situation they have been called upon to remedy. They have special training in lift rescues. From whom? The lift manufacturers themselves, generally. — F. SIMMONS, A.M.I.Fire E., Tower Road, Strawberry Hill, Twickenham, Middlesex.

Tom Warlum says that the brake incident occurred about five years ago. He was called in, although the lift was not one of his firm's. His son Dennis, also a lift engineer, went with him. The firemen who were dismantling the brake had hand winding gear in position. "It's possible that they had tried to wind the lift upward, and found it too difficult," says Warlum. "If they had wound it downward, it would probably have moved comparatively easily."

Profit Lost

OUR kitchen badly needed renovating and I asked a builder for an estimate. It was far too high, so I decided to do the work myself. I whitewashed the ceiling, repainted, and built modern cupboards and a cabinet with a working surface. The job took me forty hours, and my total expenditure was £8 10s. for wood, paint, fittings and a lino remnant. The estimate for the same work had been £52. I know that wages and overheads are high these days, but I feel that the builder wanted too much profit.—C. S., Middlesex.

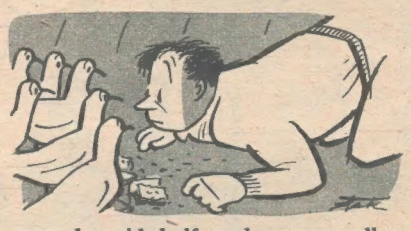
Lamp Light

I CHECKED on two sixty-watt bulbs to see how many hours of light they would give. One bulb gave 840 hours, and then went out suddenly. The other has given just over 870 hours, and is still in use.—J. L. LEA, Dornton Road, South Croydon.

An official of the Electric Lamp Manufacturers' Association says: "The average life of a general lighting service lamp operated at the marked voltage is one thousand hours. Members of the E.L.M.A. will replace lamps which fail in service before that time when the failure is shown to be due to defective materials or construction. A request for replacement should be made to the supplier."

Birds Of Passage

A FEW weeks ago I went camping on my own in a wild part of Scotland. I set up my tent, and went off for a walk. When I returned, half an hour later, there was a snowstorm blowing. I entered the tent with more speed than dignity, and landed on the



ground amid half a dozen seagulls. They had come in out of the snow, and when I arrived they were just making themselves at home with my slab of cake and sandwiches. My astonishment was nothing to theirs.—NORMAN MURPHY, Clarebank Crescent, Leith, Edinburgh.

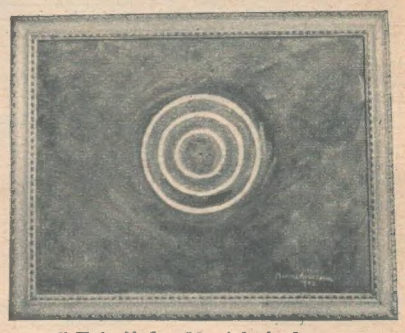
Too True

WHEN I inquired about a holiday camp at a tourist agency, I was told that it was badly situated, that it was one and a half miles from the nearest bus stop, that the food and accommodation were quite good but the all-in weekly charge excessive, and that the sea was a good ten-minute walk away—with a pebbly beach. In a men's outfitters, the assistant cheerfully informed me that the shop did not stock quality goods. They gave fair value, he said, but their customers were not interested in quality clothing. At a café, a pleasant girl said that they only served hot meals to local people who ordered. She referred me to a restaurant up the road for "good food, nicely cooked." There seems to be almost a passion for truth among some of the rising generation. It helps the public, but it cannot pay their employers.—WALTER HUDSON, Leighton Gardens, Kensal Rise, London, N.W.10.

Psychic Artist

AFTER watching an ice show on television, my wife painted a picture in colour of two of the principal skaters, whom she had seen only on the black and white of the TV screen. A year later, we met the producer of the show. He visited our home, and admired the painting. My wife asked him to tell her the colours of the clothes the artists were wearing and of the background to the scene. "They were exactly as you have them in your picture," he said. My wife had been guided by the artists in the spirit sphere.—SIR JOHN ANDERSON, Bart., St. James' Court, Westminster.

Dame Muriel Anderson, psychic artist, composer and author, died last year. Many of her paintings expressed music in visual terms. She saw a trio for flute, violin and piano as white circles on a red background—sound vibrating in the ether. Sir John Anderson, poet and lecturer, has written the foreword to a new book by Anthony Borgia, "Life In The World Unseen" (Odhams), in which it is stated that "In the spirit world all music is colour, and all colour is music."



"Trio," by Muriel Anderson

Army Medicals

WHY all this fuss about the proposal made by a group of M.P.s that all engaged couples should submit to a medical examination before they marry? Eighteen years ago, my sweetheart and I, as Salvation Army officers, had to be examined before we obtained permission to wed, and I am not aware that it spoiled our romance in any way. We would have been willing to undergo much more severe trials to gain our hearts' desire.—CHARLES LAURIE, Milford Haven, Pembrokeshire.

If two Salvation Army officers wish to become engaged to marry, they have to seek permission from their superior officers, who will ask for medical certificates of fitness. An officer may marry only another officer—this is understood by all candidates for commissions. Officers who wished to marry against the decision of their superiors would resign their commissions. "A man and wife who are officers in the Salvation Army have work to do which they could not undertake unless they were one hundred per cent fit," says a member of the Army's headquarters staff. The couple may produce certificates from their own doctors.

Letters intended for publication should be as brief as possible and include the sender's full name and address. John Bull pays a guinea for every letter printed, and at usual rates for readers' photographs. Readers with personal problems should send inquiries (other than medical) to John Bull Free Advice Service with a stamped addressed envelope for reply.

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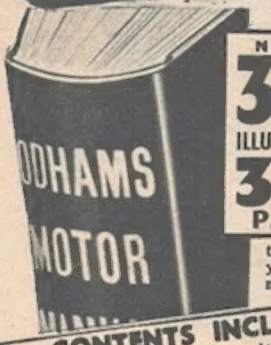

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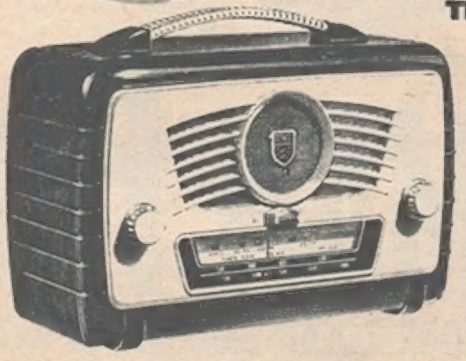

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"Look, I think you ought to face it," said the artificial limb maker gently . . .

"You'll never walk again without a stick"

PAUL BRICKHILL'S

Reach for the Sky

THE LIFE STORY OF

DOUGLAS BADER

Part Two: Learning to walk was a challenge he accepted boldly. But dare a legless man of twenty-one dream of a career—and of marriage?

IT WAS FROM Squadron Leader Woollett, his former commander, that Douglas Bader learned that his left leg had been amputated; and that since his right leg had already been cut off, he now had no legs at all. He had been told this before by one of the hospital sisters, but in his drugged state following the operation the fact had not registered. This time it sank in his brain, but distorted by the morphia and the pain it made no impact. Only the pain mattered: nothing else. He only said petulantly: "Well, why does the damn thing hurt so much?"

Bader's remark shook Woollett and he switched to the safety of squadron gossip, though he did not mention that most of the squadron felt it would have been better for Bader to have been killed outright when he crashed in his plane a few days before.

It was a grim observation for his fellow pilots to make; yet there was indeed some justification for it. When Bader had crashed on December 14, 1931, he was twenty-one years old. An arresting, vitally handsome young man and a brilliant athlete and sportsman—he had played cricket for the R.A.F. and was expected to win his rugger cap for England that season—Bader was a finely tuned human dynamo. Already he was an exceptional pilot, an airman whose dash and skill in aerobatics had been the hit of the R.A.F. display at Hendon that year. Flying and sport were Bader's whole being. For a man like him, what zest could be found in a life without legs?

The impact of losing his legs never hit Bader in one moment, or even in a day or a week. The realization formed slowly in a doped mind, which was merciful. Against the agonizing urgency of the pain it was only a detail, and when the pain ebbed and allowed other things to matter his feelings were cushioned by dope that left him floating easily and somewhat detached in a tranquil, unreal present, unmindful of any future.

Joyce, the surgeon, came in later on the day of Woollett's visit and said: "Sorry, old man, but I had to take the other leg off below the

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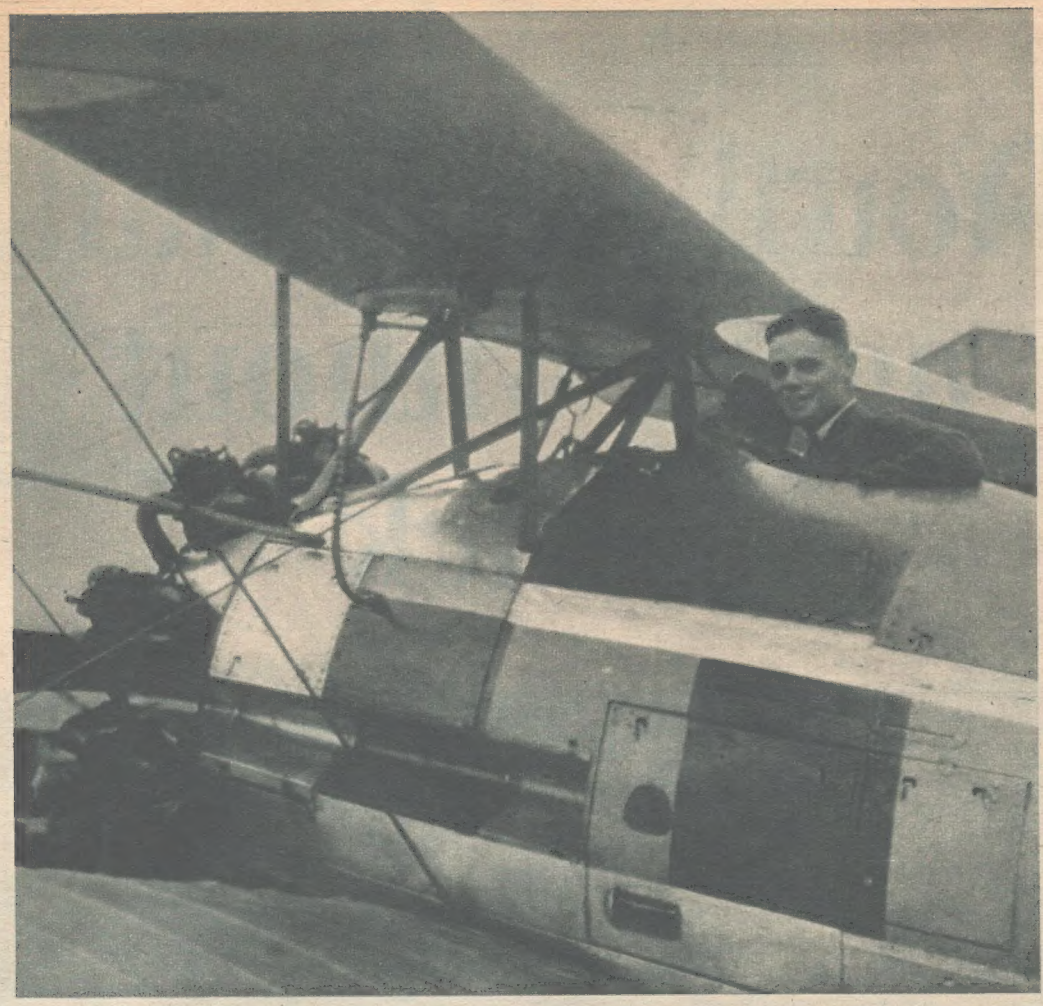
Peace has not slackened the pace of Douglas Bader, whose courage and leadership in the war won him the D.S.O. and Bar, D.F.C. and Bar. Today, at forty-four, he is still flying the world, now working for a famous oil company



Flying a Gamecock, a year before his crash. Bader was twenty, a handsome, dashing youth adored by many young women; his life an idyllic round of flying, sport and fellowship

Dorothy Brace as she is today. Bader claims that she saved his life in his touch-and-go fight to recovery

knee. I couldn't save it. You're really lucky to be in the world still."

"That's all right, sir," Bader said. "I'll get some longer legs. I always wanted to be taller."

Next day, the tenth since the crash, was Christmas Eve, and as the patient seemed disinclined to die yet, Joyce had him moved a hundred yards across a courtyard from the main hospital to Greenlands, the private nursing home in the grounds of the Royal Berkshire Hospital, Reading. They put him in a friendly little room on the ground floor looking out on the lawns and a green deodar tree. There were gay curtains, deep chairs and a bookcase to give it a cheerful atmosphere. Nurses kept injecting dope to quell the outraged nerves in the left leg, and Christmas Day was a blank to him. So were the next two days. Joyce was still afraid he would die from either thrombosis or sepsis.

Nurse With A Friendly Laugh

On the fourth morning he was conscious of a new nurse by his bed saying that she would have to change his dr ssings. He started sweating again, remembering the pain he had felt with this before, but she brought hot water and spent twenty minutes soaking them off so that he did not feel a thing. It endeared him to the new girl from that moment. Dorothy Brace was petite, with a friendly laugh, and she used her hands tenderly.

The pain was under control now, and about this time he remembered talking to his mother for the first time, though she had been sitting by the bed for days dabbing sweat off the grey face. They never mentioned the legs and most of the talk was a stilted fumbling for safe subjects.

His two friends, Patricia and Hilda, came to see him, too, both overflowing with a girl's warmth and sympathy for a wounded warrior, though Patricia, the more attractive of the two, was normally a rather brittle type. The more sensible Hilda said: "Look, Douglas, don't worry about losing your legs. If you'll take me as a typical young woman, the fact that you've lost your legs doesn't make any difference at all. You're still my favourite boy."

"I don't give a damn about losing my legs," he said amiably. "Honestly, it doesn't worry me a bit." In his drugged state he obviously meant it. Another time he said to his aunt, Hazel Burge: "I can't always believe I've lost them, you know. I can still feel my toes."

Just before New Year, Joyce took the stitches out. Bader braced himself for it, but there were only a couple of snipping sounds and a faint but painless sensation when the threads were pulled out. Quite rapidly he began to get better. The face filled out and got some colour, and the dark rings went from round the eyes. So did the pain in the left leg, and they tapered off the morphia. He felt well and alert, yet still unconcerned about the loss of his legs.

There were several reasons for this. Over the days, through the soothing morphia and the monopolizing pain, the loss had slowly infiltrated his mind so that he had digested it gradually, absorbing it into his mentality through a cushioned pressure that did not jar. By the time it had clarified into reality he was already temporarily adjusted to it.

Another reason was that he did not—yet—miss his legs. He was comfortably in bed where legs were only remote extensions, and surrounded by attractive girls who brought him anything he wanted like devoted and adoring angels. There was no need to move a finger; he had chicken and egg-flips, fruit and cream, books, friends paying court, and a gramophone which gave him bliss by grinding out "Trees" or "Abdul the Bul-Bul Emir," nearly all day. Old friends from the squadron popped now and then through the window, assuring him by their presence that he still belonged and making jokes about his beard, which, as no one had shaved him yet, was beginning to look impressive rather than scruffy.

Bader lived most agreeably in the present. The past was past, the present was good and the future had not yet intruded. Let it wait. His nature, nearly always so practical, still had

". . . A place beside Captain Scott"

"REACH FOR THE SKY" has received outstanding praise from the critics. "Certain to sweep to startling success," says the *Sunday Express*.

The *Observer* critic writes: ". . . an exciting, straightforward account." *The Times* says: "Mr. Brickhill catches the gay, slightly contemptuous, swashbuckling, egotistic, exuberant spirit of the man. . . . As a story of war adventures this is an excellent book, but it goes farther in revealing what the body can stand if only the spirit will put it under fierce compulsion."

The *News Of The World* says: "It would be assured of best-seller success even were the tale not so compellingly and sympathetically unfolded."

The *Evening Standard* has chosen *Reach For The Sky* as the Book of the Month. Its critic says: "The Bader story is one to uplift the heart."

Tributes have come from two fellow pilots. Richard Pape, author and wartime escaper, writes in the *Daily Mail*: "*Reach For The Sky*" will stir a glow of pride in British hearts—in any heart, for that matter."

In the *Daily Express*, Group Captain Hugh Dundas, who flew with Douglas Bader in the Battle of Britain, says: "The most uplifting story I have ever read. It has told me in detail a story of courage which I never completely appreciated before, even though I have known Douglas well for many years."

For author Paul Brickhill, *The Sunday Times* gives this praise: "The best possible man for the job." And its critic has this to say: "To my mind, Bader's story takes its place beside that of Captain Scott."

the capacity for dealing with first things first and shutting out others. The first thing was to get well again and that he was obviously achieving.

With Patricia and Hilda (plus occasional others) and his mother always popping in there was seldom a dull moment. His mother did not wholeheartedly approve of the girls, nor they of each other. As none would submit to the indignity of calling by roster it fell to Dorothy Brace to juggle the callers in the interests of peace, so that when one was in session with the patient she kept guard and diverted any others of the female sex. There was one hectic day when the two girls arrived within a minute of each other while Bader's mother was with her son. The nurse had no sooner steered Hilda into a waiting-room than Patricia arrived, and she bundled Patricia quickly into a refrigerator room, thinking: that'll cool her off.

Dorothy Brace much preferred Hilda, who was devoted and completely unselfish, though Douglas, as a young man will, was becoming a little smitten by the more glittering, if less enduring, Patricia.

Up And About In A Wheelchair

On January 15 he got up for the first time—a month and a day after the crash. He put on a dressing-gown in bed, Dorothy Brace pushed a wheelchair to the bed and he heaved himself into it with his hands and sat there beaming with satisfaction. He wheeled himself to the window and sat looking out, but found he quickly became tired and was put back to bed in a couple of hours. Yet within a week he had the bandages off his stumps and was able to wheel himself into the garden and spin around talking cheerfully to the gardeners.

At the end of January, Joyce said he could have a peg-leg on the left stump and try getting about with crutches. Bader wanted to start off with a "real" artificial leg, but Joyce said that would be a waste because the stump would probably shrink later. The real reason was that he had to operate on the stump again to cut more bone away, but he did not mention that.

A little man in a white coat came into the room next day to take a plaster cast of the left stump for the socket into which it would fit on the peg-leg (he called it a "pylon"—that was the trade name). Bader bared his stump and the man slapped the plaster on. In five minutes it had set, and as the man pulled it off all the hairs of the stump were dragged out by the roots with it, in a thousand little pinpricks of torture. Bader was taken by surprise. His shocked bellows of agony reached to the farthest cranny of the hospital and the language made people blanch. The little man apologized, nearly in tears. He had forgotten, he confessed, to put a thin sock over the stump first.

The little man was back in a couple of days with the "pylon," a short smoothly turned piece of wood, painted black, and with a rubber pad on the bottom. At the top was a leather socket made from the plaster cast and above this two metal arms stuck up on each side, hinged where the knee went and ending in a leather corset to be laced round the thigh. Bader strapped it on, with the little man explaining that the weight was taken on the sides of the leather socket, not on the bottom of the stump.

First Steps On A Peg-leg

It felt very odd when he put it on. The stump fitted neatly into the moulded leather, but it felt strange to the unaccustomed skin, and the thigh corset gripped firmly. Sitting on the edge of the bed with the little man, Dorothy Brace and a big Irish nurse watching, he bent his knee to waggle the pylon and get a little used to it. Brace passed him a pair of crutches and said: "Now don't forget, you won't have any strength in that leg at all for a while."

One on each side, they helped him up from the bed to ease his weight on the crutches. Tentatively he let his weight sink on to the pylon and the knee buckled like a piece of paper. It had no strength at all. They held him up while he shuffled each crutch forward in turn, and like that they lurched all over the room giggling. It seemed a great joke. After half an hour he was tired out. Later he tried again and again, but it was three days before he was able to hobble a couple of steps without help, with the left knee feeling as though it would collapse at any moment.

Having A Bath Was Ecstasy

A day or two later came a milestone in his career when he was able to stump down the corridor and take a bath—the first since his accident. He had worked out in advance how he would get into it—sit on the edge, unlace the pylon and then lower himself into it with hands on each side.

Sinking into the hot water was ecstasy and he lay there a long time and got Dorothy Brace to scrub his back. Getting out was not very difficult either. When he heaved himself up with a hand on each side, he was surprised to find how easy it was and remembered that Joyce had told him he would be about thirty pounds lighter without his legs.

Soon he was independent of outside help and spent hours stumping about the garden. It felt really good to be moving round again, and in the limited world of the garden the loss of his legs still did not seem at all serious, though the skin over each stump was contracting and stretching tightly over the bone-ends that he could clearly feel protruding.

Joyce said one day: "We'll soon have to trim these off a bit, you know. Otherwise they might split the skin. We didn't have time to do them properly before and you can't get your proper legs until the stumps are all right."

"Another operation?" Bader asked.

"Yes. But it'll be all right this time. You're as strong as a young bull." Joyce's manner seemed to be trying to soothe him, but it was unnecessary, partly because Bader had complete faith in him and partly because his mind was still comfortable and secure from the weeks of protective kindness.

He said flippantly: "That's all right, Doc. I'm all for you having your fun."

Joyce, professional dignity ruffled, remarked a little severely: "It isn't exactly fun, old chap."

"Well, I don't mind, Doc. You can cut my head off if you like."

"Would the day after tomorrow suit you?" Unused to this attitude, the surgeon was a little formal.

"Fine. Any time you like." He genuinely felt no nervousness at all.

Sawed Two Inches Off Bone

On the chosen morning, Joyce sawed about two inches off the bone of the right stump—the leg had been cut off above the knee in the first operation—pulled the muscles down over the bevelled edges to make a pad at the base and sewed them underneath. On the left leg, which had been amputated six inches below the knee, he took about an inch off the fibula, the little bone behind the shin. There was no hurry this time; the patient stood it easily.

Bader woke drowsily back in his bed, noted that the blankets were humped over a cradle, and drifted off to sleep again. Hours later, nagging pain brought him more sharply awake; this time it was the right stump. The pain grew till it was like sharp teeth gnawing and tearing ceaselessly at the raw nerves and he was rolling his head from side to side in instinctive and futile struggles to get away from it. Dorothy Brace gave him morphia, but soon the pain cut through the drug and he began to sweat

Continued on page 31

Robert Desoutter, who made Bader's artificial legs, was amazed when he spurned a stick and walked at the first attempt. "I've never even seen a chap with *one* leg do that," he said

Charlie Walker, as Bader remembers him, in the grounds of Roehampton. Today he is seventy-six and still at work there making artificial limbs

Uncle Thomas and the Wall of Death

by ***JACK TREVOR STORY***

ILLUSTRATED BY CHARLES WOOD

I thought I'd seen enough danger and excitement for one day. But there was more—much more—to come

I HAVE HERE, as the market vendors say, a letter telling me something to my advantage, as the solicitors say. It makes me happy and sad, for it comes as the result of the death of the meanest man I ever knew, and I loved him. If Uncle Thomas had not been a miser, lifelong, he would not have saved the six hundred pounds which is going to make all the difference to my career. But then, if he had not been ludicrously careful where money was concerned, I would have no career to look forward to. I would have died at the pathetic age of ten and Uncle Thomas would have died as well, and all to save a few coppers in bus fares.

Uncle Thomas was my mother's eldest brother, and he and his wife, my Auntie Rosie, kept a smallholding in the village of Dower Bank, which is in the Isle of Ely fens in Cambridgeshire. My father was killed in France in 1918, and my mother was struggling to bring up five children on a war pension. The struggle used to get too much for her when the schools broke up for the long summer holidays, and so she used to distribute us among relatives.

I used to stay with Uncle Thomas because I liked him and he liked me. I suspect that he liked me because I never wanted to do anything expensive.

Every summer I went to Dower Bank, travelling in the guard's van with a label pinned on to my jersey.

Uncle Thomas was a dark, craggy, serious man with a lot of rough hair. Auntie Rosie was a pretty, fat woman with a tendency to giggle. I got on well with them both and I loved the farm, which was not miles from anywhere but was tucked at one end of the High Street, an ivy-covered cottage with a yard at the side and stables and sties and stalls stretching out behind. They had six milking cows, Friesians, the black-and-white ones, whose milk was not the richest but was certainly the most plentiful.

"It all brings the same price," Uncle used to say. "Why strain y'self for an extra gill of cream?"

They certainly did very well with dairy produce: "new" milk at threepence a pint and skimmed at a penny. We had to use skimmed milk in the house, but it was warm and frothy, straight from the separator, and it was one of my inexpensive joys to scoop off the froth with my hand and eat it, together with dried beans from the stack at the end of the yard. There were a lot of ways in which a boy could enjoy himself without spending money, and my knowledge of them endeared me to Uncle Thomas.

"How much have you got this year?" used to be his first question when I arrived at the end of July.

Usually I had about five shillings to last me the six weeks.

"There's a wicked waste," Uncle Thomas would say. "That's a day's hard work for someone."

It was his habit to equate money with hours of labour, and at a time when agricultural wages were not exactly munificent even a few coppers represented toil and time to Uncle Thomas.

It so happened that the year I was ten coincided with the advent of the Wall of Death at Brankton Fair.

I could see that Uncle was interested when he first noticed the new miracle illustrated in the *Brankton Recorder*.

As always, he tried to hide his interest, but by that time I knew, and so did my aunt, that Uncle had a boyish zest for all modern miracles. He had one of the first crystal sets in Dower Bank, which he excused on the grounds of getting the weather reports and latest fat stock prices. The Wall of Death he just frankly disbelieved.

"There's a trick for you," he said to Auntie Rosie. "Getting people to pay money under false pretences."

WE went to Brankton on a Saturday, which happened to be the last day of the fair. The object of the trip was to pay some bills and conduct various other bits of business in the market town. And for some reason, which I could not at first fathom, Uncle got the idea that I was intent on going with him.

"They don't do returns on the bus," he grumbled. "That means threepence each way for you."

"I don't mind not going," I said.

Then, as though I hadn't spoken, he asked me how much I'd got left of my pocket money.

"Ninepence," I told him.

"Ah well," he said. "That'll leave you a tanner."

I pointed out that it would only leave me threepence.

"Not if we walk back," he said.

So that's what we did. But before we faced the five-mile walk home we somehow paid an unscheduled visit to the fair on Brankton Common and saw the Wall of Death.

"I don't know what you want with these

"Please, Uncle," I pleaded, "Can't we take a

places," Uncle Thomas said, as we strolled around the stalls and the side-shows.

He spoke as though I had dragged him there, when in fact fairs have always made me feel sick. And he was still being indulgent when we got to the Wall of Death, a great cylinder of timber with garish pictures of dare-devil motor-cyclists painted on the outside and the snarl of tortured engines coming from inside.

We stood together on the fringe of the crowd, watching people pay their fourpences and climb the steps to the top of the arena.

Uncle Thomas was frowning round at everything, his eyes bird-bright and his mouth open a little. Then suddenly he said: "Well, if you see this, all your money'll be gone."

I told him I didn't want to see the Wall of Death. It sounded a bit frightening. He wasn't listening to me, he was listening to the racing engines.

"But I suppose if you must, you must," he said.

It *was* frightening. With only their thundering speed to keep them up, the motor-bikes roared round and round the wall, coming up almost to the top. There was no trick about

bus home?" I was tired and hungry. But he wouldn't listen; nothing would induce him to spend another halfpenny. "Come on," he said. "We'll walk"

that, and Uncle Thomas had to admit it. "Well I'm danged!" he said, and flinched back every time machine and rider flashed up towards us.

But when we came out, Uncle Thomas soon lost the excitement of it under a blanket of depression. It was growing dark now, and I was tired and hungry. "Please, Uncle, can't we take a bus home?" I pleaded.

But he wouldn't listen. He was already regretting the sixpence we had just spent—fourpence for adults, twopence for children—and he couldn't bring himself to pay out any more.

"Come on," he said. "We'll walk. If we go the short way, we can do it in just over the hour."

THE short way was through Lingley Fen and past the chalk pits on the hills beyond. They were massive workings which had something to do with the cement works, and so quickly was the ground dug out and spewed up into great white pyramids of chalk or clunch that the landscape never looked quite the same from one day to the next.

"If we cut through here," Uncle Thomas said, at one dark stage of our journey, "we'll come out in Cement Works Lane. That'll save us a bit of time."

When it happened, we were climbing a great hillock of chalk which had been excavated long ago and on which grass was already flourishing. It was not quite dark, but neither was it easy to see.

We came to the summit of the hillock quite suddenly and Uncle Thomas stepped over the sharp ridge first. Suddenly, his feet went from under him and I grabbed at his coat as he started slithering down a steep slope of loose clunch. He was a heavy man and at ten I was not very big.

It was a kind of bowl, a big inverted cone of a hole, into which tons of broken chalk had been dumped, leaving a loose steep surface on which it was impossible to find an anchor. I suppose we were both sliding down for only a few seconds, but we must have fallen at least thirty feet and at the bottom—water. Unpleasantly dirty, stagnant water. I know, because I went right under.

"Bloody wars!" Uncle Thomas said. He had never sworn in front of me before, but I'd overheard him talking to the cows when they wouldn't stand still for milking.

I didn't say anything for it was taking me all my time to keep my head above water, which I could just do by stretching every joint.

AT first we both tried scrambling back the way we'd come, but it was useless. The crumbly chalk just slid down as we tried to climb up. And then, when we waded round the pond of water, we found that we were well and truly trapped. It was as bad as being in a well, and the advantage that might have come from having sloping walls above us instead of vertical, was lost by the nature of the surface.

"Well I'm danged!" Uncle Thomas said, after we'd negotiated the circumference of our trap. "A blessed manhole this is and no mistake."

He was up to his waist in water, and I still had my head just above the surface. The water, which had either settled there from rain or seeped up from a spring, was about nine feet across. And it was cold. Terribly, numbingly cold, considering the time of year.

The first organized thing we tried was my

I held the lighter, and he began to scribble. When I saw the first words, I lost all hope

climbing on to Uncle's shoulders so that I was a good bit of the way up the sloping wall of our prison.

"Now," he said, "I'll shove your feet up and you try climbing the last bit—gently does it."

I had to give it up after I'd brought about a hundredweight of the stuff on to Uncle's head.

"All right, laddie," Uncle Thomas called out. "That's enough. I'd rather die of exposure than suffocate."

It was a preposterous situation: we were so near to home, in such safe surroundings. One would have expected these lethal man-made hazards to have been fenced off, but then, it was cement works property and we had no business on it.

I didn't get right down into the water again, for Uncle could feel how much I was trembling from the cold. Instead, I sat astride his shoulders with just my feet dangling in. But it was a position which neither of us could maintain indefinitely.

"We'll have to shout," Uncle said. "One, two, three and then 'help'. . . ."

We shouted for ten minutes as loud as we knew how, then listened, hopefully. There was nothing but a very deep silence. Far away on the main road, a car engine; much closer, the low whirring of the cement works mixers which went round and round all night. The machinery there was probably too loud to let small cries for help get through.

Uncle Thomas grunted. He, too, was beginning to tremble with the cold now. He was still up to his waist in cold water.

I said: "If I could scrape a sort of ledge we could sit above the water level."

"Come on, then," he said. "Let's try."

And that was another half hour of wasted energy. As fast as we scraped the loose chalk into the water, more piled down in a landslide. We were like flies in the dregs of a teacup and there was no way of getting out.

"It's no use," I said, and stopped scraping. And he stopped scraping, too, and didn't say anything.

Soon after that, I felt the water creeping up my legs. At first I thought it was rising and went all panicky inside. But then I could feel that it was really Uncle who was slipping farther down in the water. "I'm too heavy for you, Uncle," I said. "I'll get off."

"You stay where you are, laddie," he said.

"But you're slipping."

"Am I?" He tried to press himself higher up the steep bank of chalk. "The trouble is," he said, "I can't feel my legs now."

And I think it was in the dark moment of silence following that statement that we both saw what might easily lie ahead of us. I felt him fumbling in his pockets and soon I heard the flickering noise of his cigarette lighter. They were not very efficient in those days and he had a big clumsy brass affair which was never an easy thing to light. Luckily it had gone into the water only once, when he first tumbled down, and it was in a pocket above the water line. At last it broke into flame.

"Hold it for me," he said.

Sitting there on his big shoulders, my legs dangling either side of his neck, I now held the lighter wick in front of his forehead. It was a grotesque, nightmare scene, and one which I shall never lose.

"Right," he said. "Keep it there. I just want to do a bit of scribbling. . . ."

I only had to see the first few words which he wrote so laboriously on the scrap of paper held against his leather wallet to know what he was doing. "My Darling Rosie" were the first three words. Uncle Thomas was writing a farewell note. He had given up hope. And when I knew that, so did I.

I must have sobbed or something—after all, I was only ten and my mother was a long way

Continued on page 30

With a coating of adhesive, John Head sticks wood to brick. He has climbed a gasholder and gone down a mine to demonstrate his firm's products

Salesman with the limpet touch

by JOHN HARMAN

False eyelashes and fingernails, or bumpers for cows' horns—they prove the power of John Head's adhesives

IN A FIERCE Atlantic storm some years ago a sheet of linoleum was ripped off the deck of a destroyer and took a sailor's life. Whipped by a gale-force wind, it curled around him and carried him overboard. Shortly after the accident John Head, a tall, easy-mannered salesman from a Leicester firm of adhesive makers, mentioned to a shipyard manager that it would never have happened if the linoleum had been glued to the metal deck.

When the manager scoffed at the idea and said that no glue yet invented would stick securely to steel, Head decided on a demonstration. He smeared some black adhesive over a heavy steel plate which was lying in the yard and stuck the plate so firmly to a strip of linoleum that even blows with a heavy hammer failed to dislodge it.

"The manager was surprised, but not wholly convinced," Head recalls. "As a further test he suspended the linoleum from a quay so that it was alternately soaked and dried at high and low tide." After three months the plate was still clinging like a limpet.

The Bostik adhesives made by the firm of which Head, at forty-four, is now sales manager are today used for holding down flooring on ships of all kinds, from luxury liners to small yachts. They are also used for such varied purposes as putting up plaster board ceilings in houses, securing windows in trains and fixing chevrons on police sergeants' mackintoshes.

Industrialists have come to accept them as essential for making TV sets, shoes, jewellery, imitation flowers and hundreds of other goods. Head occasionally finds, however, that the public needs considerable persuading that modern adhesives, which are powerful amalgams of rubber, resin, petrol and carbon black, are far more efficient than old-type glues.

On a business tour of South Africa recently he met a man in Durban who assured him that it was impossible to fix wall tiles in the town because moisture in the atmosphere prevented glues from hardening. To demonstrate that dampness made no difference to his products, Head coated a tile with adhesive, plunged it into a bucket of water and pressed another tile on top. Although completely submerged the tiles became firmly bonded together. "In fact," says Head, "a pull of more than four tons would have been needed to separate them."

Demonstrating the versatility of adhesives has taken Head down coal mines and into factories, offices, garages and shops. He has needed agility—he once crawled over the hull of a flying-boat moored in the Medway—and has had to get used to heights. In a severe thunderstorm he climbed to the top of a gasholder to supervise repairs. When he called at a West End hotel to show how waterproof adhesive can fill in cracks round window-frames, he was taken to the roof, put in a workman's cradle and lowered down the front of the hotel to get on with the job.

"We have had to produce more than three hundred and twenty different adhesives, many of them tailored to customers' requirements," he says. "Our research men are continually adding to the list." One factory wanted an

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THE SWEET WITH THE HOLE

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odourless adhesive for fastening panels inside refrigerators. Another, making artificial silk, asked for a thin, tacky fluid which could be sprayed over bobbins to prevent the thread from unwinding too fast. A more unusual request came from a farmer whose cows were troublesome; he wanted to stick rubber bumpers on their horns to stop them from goring each other.

When a beauty parlour asked for adhesives suitable for false eyelashes and fingernails, Head obliged—but he refused to accept responsibility for the consequences. "Sometimes peoples' skins are allergic to chemicals," he told his client. On another occasion, he refused to help a woman who wanted to stick plastic shoes on her horse's hooves; if it fell and lost a race, he pointed out, he might be blamed.

Plastics are a constant difficulty to Head, for most adhesives will not stick to them. Clients for whom adhesives have had to be invented include a manufacturer of plastic skeletons, and a man who wanted to stick halves of plastic cricket balls together.

Lead Is Obstinate Metal

A harder problem concerned a hospital where nurses had to wear indicators on their blouses as a warning when they were exposed to radio-activity. The indicators, which were like badges, consisted of photographic paper sandwiched between pieces of plastic and half-encased in lead. The problem was to stick the lead, an obstinate metal where adhesives are concerned, to the equally obstinate plastic.

Once, the flooring in a ship's dining-saloon, which was directly over the refrigerators, worked loose when the low temperature cracked the adhesive. Head went to Avonmouth, where the ship was docked, and discovered that the floor had been taken up and was stacked in pieces around the saloon. The task of putting it back again with new adhesive was a giant jig-saw puzzle. When he finished, several hours later, he looked through a porthole and saw the open sea. The captain had forgotten he was on board and the ship had sailed for Jamaica. A tug was summoned and Head, after climbing down a rope ladder, was sent ashore.

He often gets angry letters from householders who try to stick coathooks on to painted doors and find that the hooks come away with the paint. "Adhesives are only as strong as the surfaces to which they are applied," he says.

"People also tend to forget that rubber adhesives are different from gums or pastes and must be left to dry *before* the surfaces are stuck together."

Deck Was Stuck For Good

A shipyard worker who had repeatedly ignored Head's warning on this point—and had done unsatisfactory work as a result—finally learned his lesson. Engaged on laying rubber flooring, he spread some adhesive over a deck and then broke off for a meal. On returning he decided to lay the flooring without using more adhesive to keep the joints wet, as he usually did. The time lapse was exactly what the adhesive needed. Later, when he noticed that the decking was out of true, neither he nor his mates could shift it.

In the first stage of adhesives' manufacture, large machines chew bales of raw rubber into a smooth paste. Others slowly knead in carbon black and resins. Then petrol, delivered in three thousand-gallon tanker lorries, is added. Owing to the risk of fire the Leicester factory is heavily equipped with the latest alarm and sprinkler devices.

Precautions are also taken to ensure that adhesive, once mixed, is kept airtight and on the move. Donald Cameron, the managing director, recalls that when several hundred-weights of adhesive were being churned in a big mixer, the factory was suddenly paralysed by a power cut. The cut lasted for an hour, by which time the adhesive had set hard and the machine was locked solid. "We tried to hack at the mess, but it was as hard as ebony. Eventually the whole machine had to be dismantled," says Cameron.

A call for help once came from a shoe shop in Bristol. "The front of a large decorative aquarium had fallen out of its frame and the shop floor was covered with water and wriggling fish. There was little I could do except tell them to put back the glass with a proper sealing compound," says Head.

Sealing compounds—adhesives of heavy viscosity—are made by his firm in thousands of gallons. Shortly before the war he demonstrated them in Berkeley Square by sealing London's first static water tank. Later, when showing them to council authorities in Essex, he waterproofed an Anderson air-raid shelter so thoroughly that when firemen pumped water around it the shelter, complete with concrete base, rose three feet out of its hole and floated.

At a critical stage in the war, when tanks being sent to Russia were arriving rusty and useless after stormy trips on the decks of cargo ships, the firm was asked to devise a method of waterproofing them. Many attempts were made. One experiment took place in a howling gale and resulted in seven men entangling themselves in coils of gummed tape.

Finally, at a Ministry of Supply ordnance depot in Nottinghamshire, the problem was solved by wrapping each machine in a tight parcel of rubberized material stuck down with adhesive. Panels from barrage balloons seemed the most suitable fabric for the job, but the main warehouse for them was more than a hundred miles away. "Some tanks were due for immediate dispatch and the Ministry decided to be ruthless," says Head. "Two balloons at a nearby town were brought down for us."

The son of a professional inventor, Head was introduced to adhesives by a chance remark which he made at the age of twelve. At the time, crêpe soles were stuck on shoes with rubber solution, but this was not always successful because the solution bonds poorly to leather. When his father complained one day that his crêpes were peeling off, Head suggested coating the leather soles of the shoes with rubber latex—which sticks to leather, though not to rubber—and then sticking the crêpes to the latex with rubber solution. "The idea worked perfectly. My pocket-money went up from a shilling to half-a-crown a week."

Shortly afterwards, his father started business as an adhesive manufacturer. Head joined him on leaving school, but transferred to his present firm when his father retired in 1935. As a major in the R.A.S.C. during the war, Head used adhesives for such purposes as waterproofing invasion stores which had to be dumped on enemy beaches and left there for several tides.

Looks Up—Just In Case

Sometimes customers expect too much from adhesives. One London warehouse has stuck its name in thick glass letters high above the door. "Theoretically, they should be safe," says Head, "but whenever I walk underneath I always look up—just in case."

His greatest worry over the strength of his products happened when a client was flying to South Africa in a private monoplane. Just before the take-off, Head was called to the airport to make an emergency repair to a wing panel. An hour after the plane had taken off, Head began to wonder if the adhesive was unsuitable for aircraft.

"I listened to every radio news bulletin and anxiously scanned the papers for news of a crash," he admits. "Until the plane landed in Cape Town I had three sleepless nights—and three more while it flew back." THE END

Head watches as Dr. Norman Reynolds, the chief analyst, decides on the best adhesive for a new material. They have abandoned their dream of finding one formula to satisfy all demands

THE BOSS MUST GO

by TRAVERS HUTCHINS

ILLUSTRATED BY FRED LAURENT

Hand over his firm — to these scoundrels? Forget all he had planned for his grandson? Entwistle gritted his teeth. He'd show them yet!

JAMES ENTWISTLE looked round the boardroom table. For the first time in his life he was having to consider whom he could trust. It was a feeling that he didn't like. All through the forty-odd years of his working life he had prided himself on knowing whether a man was straight or not. But now he had doubts . . . and they were doubts about his own board of directors.

"These are pretty powerful arguments, chairman," Stone was saying. "And I must admit that I do see some reason on the side of Hookham and his friends. . . ."

Entwistle stopped listening to Stone's smooth, quiet voice. I believe Maggie's right, he thought grimly. She said that Stone hadn't any spine. Or was it just that his spine was very flexible? Well, a flexible spine was better than no spine at all.

His eyes passed quickly over Didlock. He knew it was no use relying on him. Thirty years as the company's cashier before he became a director had not fitted poor old Didlock for battles of this kind. Like all good cashiers, he always played for safety.

Charlie Bates was sound—sound as a well-made bell. Charlie had come up from the factory floor. He had been a foreman, then works manager before he got his seat on the board.

Entwistle's glance fell on Grundy. He had been brought in as an "efficiency expert" some years ago. Although he had come with a great reputation, Entwistle had often regretted the day he had agreed to such an appointment. Certainly a lot of Grundy's ideas had been good —anyway, they had saved the firm a lot of money on paper. But they had also cut Entwistle off from the men who worked in the factory. Grundy had become the link between the workshops and the boardroom. And Mr. Efficiency Grundy owed no loyalty to Jim Entwistle; or to anybody else for long, Entwistle suspected.

He didn't have to think twice about Hookham. Hookham represented International

Financial Combinations, and was as loyal to that vast, impersonal organization as Charlie Bates was to Entwistle. When I.F.C. advanced money for the building of the new workshops, they had been perfectly frank in saying that they wanted a representative on the board to look after their interests. That was fair enough, and Entwistle had agreed at once.

Most of that loan was now repaid. But in the meantime I.F.C. had been busily buying every share in the company they could lay hands on. Now they were demanding more directors on the board. And they spoke, through Hookham, as if there were no question of refusal.

Entwistle rubbed his massive chin with the palm of his hand, his powerful fingers splayed out across his face. Stone paused in the middle of a sentence. Clever chap, Entwistle thought. He's noticed that I rub my chin like this when I've made up my mind. Knows when he's said enough.

Stone looked over to the head of the table where Entwistle sat, turning on him that warm friendly smile that had helped so much to make him the first-class salesman he was when Jim Entwistle first sent him out on the road.

"I really don't think I need say any more, chairman," he said. "Either you see it Hookham's way or you don't. It's not for me to try to persuade you one way or the other."

Oh yes, *very* flexible, Entwistle thought. "Anyone else want to take up the task of making me see reason?" he asked. There was an uncomfortable silence. "Right!" Entwistle sat back in his chair, his hands firmly planted on the table in front of him. "The shareholders of this company elect the board of directors by majority votes. And the shareholders can also sack directors."

GRUNDY winced at the word "sack." His efficiency schemes had led to plenty of sackings, but he clearly didn't like the word to be used about directors.

Entwistle went on: "Hookham's crowd have been buying up shares in Entwistle Electrical for some time. They haven't had the guts to buy them openly—they hold them under half a dozen fancy names. So I don't know exactly how much they've got hold of. But I do know that they haven't got a clear majority of votes at a shareholders' meeting."

Entwistle threw back his grey head. He looked like a lion at bay. At length he exploded: "Well, be damned to them! If they want a trial of strength, they can have it at the shareholders' meeting next month!"

He rose to his feet and stalked from the room.

But when he sat alone in his own office afterwards, he did not feel as confident as he had tried to appear in the boardroom.

He wished that he had not sold that little block of shares three years ago. Up to then he had always held fifty-one per cent of the company's stock. Now he had only forty-nine per cent. A nice holding—but not enough if everybody ganged against him.

The men who had put up the money to start Jim Entwistle in business, when he was a brilliant young engineer, had all been much older than he was. And recently, one after another, they had died. As their shares came on the market, I.F.C. had bought them up, he was sure. He had never known who had bought the shares he had *himself* sold three years ago. They stood in the name of bank trustees. That might mean anything.

He shrugged his shoulders. No use crying over spilt milk. With the money he had got for those shares—and quite a slice out of his savings—young Anne and her husband were now settled on as fine a farm as could be found in the whole country.

For some time, Entwistle stared moodily into the fire. Then Anne leant forward. "Dad, isn't there something I can do to help?"

It was a pity that Anne had married a natural-born farmer instead of an engineer. However, she had three fine boys of her own growing up now. Provided he could hang on long enough, he might have a grandson to take the business over. . . .

If International Financial Combinations didn't get it first!

He reached out and pressed down a switch on the big polished box on his desk. That box used to be his pride and joy. It had been specially built in the factory for him. When he pressed down the centre switch—the only red one on the box—a little silver model of a lighthouse lit up. And when it was alight he was talking to everybody in the whole factory.

But his lighthouse did not shine very often nowadays. Grundy handled works relations. The days when Entwistle had spoken direct to the men on the factory floor were gone.

A little light glowed above the key he had depressed.

"I want you in here, Maggie," he said quietly. He never had to raise his voice when he spoke into his lighthouse box. The microphone inside it could pick up a whisper from the farthest corner of the room.

Maggie was Miss Williams to the office staff, and Margaret to her mother. But for twenty years, ever since she came to the firm as a nervous little shrimp of seventeen, she had been Maggie to Entwistle and to most of the older men in the factory, too—behind her back at least. But then, Entwistle was "Big Jim" to them—or had been, before Grundy's day.

She was still a little shrimp beside Big Jim. But no longer a nervous one. She was a fighter. She'd fight anybody for what she thought was right. And she'd had some fights.

When his wife died, and he had let everything slide, Maggie had fought to pull him back. It was she who had found him a housekeeper, she who chose a school for young Anne. And when Anne wanted to marry an airman with farming ambitions, instead of the engineer he had in mind, it was Maggie who had fought for the girl. And won.

Maggie burst into the room; she was waving something excitedly. Looking at Entwistle, she cried: "You must see these—at once!"

SHE had a sheet of paper in her hand as she came into the room. "I've been through the list of shareholders again," she explained. "That's the result worked out in percentages."

He glanced at the list. It read:

Mr. Entwistle . . .	49 per cent
I.F.C. (probably) .	39 per cent.
Unknown	2 per cent.
Workpeople	10 per cent.

"Seems all right to me," Entwistle said. "They're still a long way behind."

"Don't be too sure," she replied. "Personally, I don't like the look of it at all. Why don't you face the facts?"

"That 'Unknown' is the block of shares I sold?" he asked, avoiding her challenge.

She nodded. She looked at him accusingly, awaiting an answer.

"I still think we're sitting pretty," Entwistle

An outstanding novel begins next week . . .

BHOWANI JUNCTION

by JOHN MASTERS

VICTORIA JONES

PATRICK TAYLOR

COLONEL SAVAGE

NEXT week we begin first world publication of a great novel, one of the most important we have ever serialized. The title is *Bhowani Junction*. The author, John Masters.

Three years ago, John Masters, then thirty-six and almost unknown as a writer, announced that he intended to write thirty-five full-length novels. The grand theme: the story of the British in India.

The first three novels—*Nightrunners Of Bengal*, *The Deceivers* and *The Lotus And The Wind*—were highly praised and gave promise of even better to come.

With *Bhowani Junction*, that promise is fulfilled. John Masters has established himself as a major novelist.

Already the honours have begun to roll in. In America *Bhowani Junction* has received the much-coveted Book Of The Month Club award; book publication in Britain next month is certain to bring more.

But first of all, *Bhowani Junction* will appear in JOHN BULL.

The story is simple and gripping. The scene is India; the time, 1946. Victoria Jones, who lives at the railway junction town of Bhowani, has just returned home after serving with the British.

Victoria is an Anglo-Indian—she has Indian blood in her veins. She is twenty-eight, and engaged—precariously—to a young railway official. But she is uncertain about him, about herself, about the future.

Everything in India is uncertain. The British are preparing to leave; political and racial hatreds grip the country. At Bhowani, a Gurkha battalion has arrived to keep order and guard the railway. At any moment, violence may break out.

It does break out—and Victoria is to play a vital rôle in the events that follow.

The story is told by three of the main characters—Victoria herself; Patrick Taylor, her Anglo-Indian fiancé; and Lieutenant-Colonel Rodney Savage, the Gurkhas' commanding officer. So keen is the author's understanding of character, so brilliant his storytelling, that they leap vividly to life. Their account of those harrowing days at Bhowani makes enthralling reading.

To illustrate *Bhowani Junction* we chose William Little, renowned for his splendid full-colour illustrations to some of our greatest serial successes.

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said doggedly. "Even if you lump 'I.F.C.' and 'Unknown' together, they've only got forty-one per cent. They'll never get the chaps in the factory who own shares to come over to their side. Why, those men know they would never have had any shares at all if I hadn't put a block on one side and let them buy by instalments. Oh, no! I.F.C. can whistle for *their* support."

But his voice was not as confident as his words. He looked across the desk at Maggie with a question in his eyes.

"You're thinking of ten years ago," she said. "Things have changed. Every time that Mr. Efficiency thinks up a new scheme, somebody gets the sack. And *you* get the blame. He just shrugs his shoulders and says, 'It's chairman's orders, I'm afraid.' It's been going on like that for a long time. . . . And there's another thing," she went on. "Since we built the new workshops, you've insisted on cutting the dividend to pay off the I.F.C. loan. The men in the factory who own shares can't understand that. They think that if the dividend is down, the firm is doing badly. And nobody has bothered to explain clearly to them that it isn't so."

She looked at him accusingly. It hurt her to think that Big Jim was no longer the friend of every man in the factory.

"The new workshops meant work for hundreds more and bigger pay packets for everybody," he argued.

"Have you ever told them that?"

"And paying off the loan means that the company will stand on its own feet again and everybody's shares will be worth more," he went on.

"Have you explained *that* to them?" she asked.

"No!" he shouted. "But I will—right now."

He reached out towards the red switch.

"I shouldn't do that," she said quietly. "The lighthouse doesn't mean much nowadays. They'll only think that you're panicking. You've got to be cunning to fight cunning people."

He stared at her angrily. But she met his eyes calmly.

"I'm a fool, Maggie," he said at last. "You're right. I'll get nowhere by losing my temper." He sighed. "Trouble is, I don't quite know where I *want* to get nowadays."

"Now, about those shares I've put down as 'Unknown,'" she went on hurriedly. "They're held for somebody by the Jubilee Bank. I.F.C. have no account there as far as I can check. But I've found somebody who *has*."

But when she told him who it was, Entwistle merely said, "I've suspected him all along." She felt cheated.

When Maggie had gone back to her own room, Entwistle sat slumped in his chair for almost half an hour. His thoughts pressed down on him like a heavy load; he found himself wondering whether it was a load worth carrying any longer. Finally, on an impulse that he could not explain, he lifted the phone and put through a long-distance call.

WHEN he left the factory that evening, Topham, his driver, noticed that Big Jim's shoulders were sagging. For the first time it occurred to him that the Old Man was beginning to look his age.

"You go home by bus tonight, Topham," Entwistle said. "I'm taking the car off by myself."

But Topham was not so easily dismissed. When he learnt that Big Jim was off to the farm to see his daughter, he was adamant.

"If you think I'm letting you drive this car nigh on two hundred miles after a hard day's work, you've another think coming," he said. "I'll phone the missus on the road somewhere and let her know."

It was well after eleven o'clock when they turned off the main road and down the drive to Suttergrange.

As the car stopped, the great oak door was thrown wide open and warm, soft light flooded out. Entwistle stirred in his seat and took a deep breath, as if savouring the air of welcome. His shoulders, which had been hunched, squared up again.

Anne ran out to open the door of the car. The light from the house shone on her golden hair. Her face was in the shadows, but Entwistle could see that she was smiling. She was always smiling nowadays, he thought.

"You're a bad old man," she said. "You should have left that office of yours earlier. This is no time to arrive. I've had to send the boys to bed, and what a job *that* was when they heard that you were coming. But you'll see them early enough in the morning."

"Too much talk," said Entwistle when he stood on the porch beside her. "Give your old father a kiss. That's what he's come for." He lifted her up by her elbows, as he had done when she was a child, until her face was level with his.

It was a couple of hours later, when they were sitting round the log fire in the great

Continued on page 28

At a brass band rehearsal, Harry Mortimer makes a forceful point. He silences any bandsman who disagrees with him on musical interpretation

Harry Mortimer rules the resounding brass

by JOHN ENNIS

Britain's most famous brass band conductor has a finicky ear—and a sharp tongue he has learned to check. "After all," he says, "these chaps play for the love of it"

DURING A BRASS BAND REHEARSAL in the north of England one evening recently, Harry Mortimer, the conductor, suddenly laid down his baton. He allowed the tune that the twenty-five amateur musicians had been playing to trail off into silence, and then he complained that they were not getting the right sounds. "Even if this passage *is* quiet," he said, "you still have to blow down *both* sides of your instruments."

One bandsman thought the criticism unfair. "We've all been working since seven o'clock this morning," he said. Mortimer, a lean, restless man of fifty-two, turned swiftly. "And what do you think I've been doing?" he asked.

Mortimer, the B.B.C.'s brass and military band supervisor, had just completed what he considers a normal weekend's work. On the Saturday he had been at a brass band contest from 9.30 in the morning until 10.30 at night. On Sunday morning he attended a meeting of band conductors in London, then caught an afternoon train to Crewe. From there he travelled to a town in Shropshire, where he conducted at an evening concert. On Monday morning he was in Stockport, Cheshire, to rehearse a broadcast. Then he caught the 12.20 p.m. train to London, where he put in ninety minutes' intensive work in his office. Now, on the Monday evening, he had motored sixty miles to give an audition to another band.

Of the 100,000 brass band musicians who make up more than four thousand bands in Britain, Mortimer is the best known and the highest paid. Besides organizing every brass and military band broadcast, he has conducted seven winning bands in the National Brass Band Championship—a record equalled only by his late father, Fred Mortimer.

Members of the Fairey Aviation Works Band call Mortimer "The Pope." He earned the nickname by insisting on having his own way, silencing any bandsman who offered differing musical ideas with the statement, "There's only one Pope in Rome." Impatient of faulty playing, Mortimer admits that he often has to check his inclination to be blisteringly critical at rehearsals. "After all," he says, "these chaps are playing for the love of it—and if a man walks out I can't hire another to take his place."

Once, when Mortimer was rehearsing a

Harry plays the echo cornet, specially made for him. After years of tough training, he was hailed as the world's greatest player

northern band for the first time, his trained ear heard a wrong sound. "You're a little sharp," he told one of the cornet players, and asked him to pull out a slide on the instrument to tune it.

"If I'm sharp now," said the cornet player, "I've been sharp for the last seventeen years."

"That's no reason why you should stay sharp for the *next* seventeen years," snapped Mortimer. "Pull out the slide about a quarter of an inch." The man obeyed, but he attended no more rehearsals while Mortimer had charge of the band.

As he conducts, Mortimer frequently whistles or sings the more tuneful phrases of the piece the band is playing. To emphasize a quiet passage he goes down almost to his knees. To indicate a martial tempo he squares his shoulders and marks time with his feet. Expressions of sadness, horror, anticipation and bliss flit across his face.

To help himself to put feeling into the music, he often makes up a story to fit the sounds. A composition used recently as a test piece for a contest began with a soft, lyrical passage that was interrupted by a march theme on the trombones. The original calm tune returned, finally to be drowned by the swelling march.

"I saw this as a story of a man in a tent with an oriental maiden," says Mortimer. "Hearing a call to arms in the distance, the man starts up—only to be drawn back by the girl. But the call of duty becomes irresistible, and the man leaves her and marches off to battle. If I keep the story in my mind, I know just how the music should sound."

He finds that some bands require more strenuous conducting than others. "The Fairey bandsmen know me so well that I need only raise an eyebrow and they know what to do." On the way home from one contest, which his band had won, Mortimer travelled with a member of the audience. The man, who did not recognize Mortimer, began to criticize the apparent lack of effort in his conducting. "But the band played soft and loud, didn't they?" said Mortimer.

"Yes—but the conductor didn't," said the man.

Mortimer's finicky concern for detail has helped to take him to the top. Some years ago Sir Arthur Bliss, the composer, wrote the "Kenilworth" Suite for brass bands, and this was chosen as the test piece for the National Championship. Mortimer and his father spent a day wandering about the ruins of Kenilworth Castle, in Warwickshire. Then they found a cinema that was showing the film *Things To Come*, for which Bliss had written the incidental music. They sat through two showings of the film on each of three successive days to catch the idiom of Bliss's music.

"Father was conductor of Foden's Motor Works Band, and I was the leading cornet player," says Mortimer. "The band was going on a tour of South Africa, and we were determined to go as British champions."

Moves With Bewildering Speed

Mortimer's habit of deciding swiftly on a plan of action often leaves his acquaintances bewildered. His brother Rex, who is bandmaster of Foden's Band, recalls a recent occasion when Mortimer believed he had time to make a long-distance telephone call before boarding a train that was already in the station. "I had a difficult job to persuade him there was no time," says Rex. His secretaries at the B.B.C., Ruth Harvey and Eileen Howard, are used to getting a phone call from a town two hundred miles from the place in which they expect him to be. "On some days he moves so fast we can't track him down at all," says Ruth Harvey.

Before going on to a contest platform, Mortimer will never open the greetings telegrams he receives. He stuffs them into his pocket until the contest is won or lost. Another superstition causes him to wear a pair of new shoes whenever he conducts at the Manchester Belle Vue contest. Two years running he won this contest when, by chance, he was wearing new shoes, and he took this as a lucky omen.

The brass band movement began 150 years ago when workers sought a way of adding a musical accompaniment to religious services. Brass instruments were cheaper than pianos and violins, they allowed the learner to play some kind of tune fairly quickly, and they could be heard easily in the open air—an advantage to musicians too poor to hire halls.

Sabotage In The Early Days

By the 1850s almost every village in Britain had its own band, and contests were organized. In the early days these were often riotous occasions, with heavy betting, sabotaged instruments and kidnapping of star players. Contest judges were sometimes stoned or thrown in the nearest river by dissatisfied losers. A favourite trick was for a losing band to follow the judge to the railway station, playing a dead march.

Today's contests are respectable and well organized. The judge sits in a screened box or tent so that he cannot see which band is playing. His refreshments are searched by a committee of bandsmen to ensure that no message, indicating the order in which the competing bands are playing, is concealed in the sandwiches.

A contest band contains a maximum of twenty-five players. Their instruments are one soprano cornet, nine B flat cornets, one flugel horn, three tenor horns, two baritones, three trombones, two euphoniums and four tubas or basses. Drums—and all percussion instruments—are forbidden at contests; it would be too easy to use them to cover up mistakes. A complete set of instruments costs more than £2,000, and uniforms cost at least another £200.

Harry Mortimer's mother remembers that six months after he was born at Hebden Bridge, Yorkshire, his father sat him on a table and said, "I'm going to make you the best cornet player in the world." He did become, according to band experts, the world's greatest cornet player, but only after years of tough training.

When Harry was eight, his father took his cornet and locked it away because he was not practising enough. "I had to plead and promise to practise before I got it back," he recalls.

While still a boy he entered a contest at Bradford for solo cornet players. His father had given him a gruelling course of instruction on the test piece. He won the first prize of £10, and arrived home bursting with pride. His father, a Yorkshireman, was unimpressed. "If you've won," he said, "there must have been some poor players there."

While his father was in the army in the first World War, Harry played in the orchestra of the Palace Theatre, Luton, for thirty-five shillings a week, at a time when his daytime job at Vauxhall Motors paid him only fifteen shillings. "On the day Father arrived home from the war he came to the Palace and hauled me out, saying, 'I want you for the band.'"

At that time his father was conductor of Luton's Red Cross Band. On the night before the 1923 National Championship, Fred Mortimer was worried because the soprano cornet player, whose instrument has a higher range than the other cornets, could not be certain of playing smoothly the high note that began the test piece, "Oliver Cromwell." Though it was the highest note obtainable on his instrument, Mortimer was chosen to play it instead.

Practised Daily For A Year

Next day they won the championship, and the judge told Fred Mortimer that the first note on the soprano cornet had decided him. "That was Harry on the B flat," Fred Mortimer told the incredulous judge.

"It was the beginning of Father's ambition for me coming true," says Mortimer. "He knew that the next year, as solo cornet player of the retiring champions, I would play the main item at a concert following the contest. That night he chose the piece I was to play, a composition called 'Shylock.' He made me practise it every day for a year."

In 1925 the Mortimer family moved to Elworth, in Cheshire, to join Foden's Motor Works Band. Fred Mortimer became conductor, and his three sons, Harry, Alex and, later, Rex, were given jobs in the factory so that they could play in the band. Under Fred Mortimer, Foden's Band became world famous. Harry also played the trumpet in the Hallé, the Liverpool Philharmonic and the B.B.C. Northern orchestras. He believes that these experiences of a wider field of music helped to fit him for his present job with the B.B.C., which he took in 1941.

In March last year, Mortimer returned from a tour of New Zealand. His father, who had been rehearsing Foden's Band for the National Championship, collapsed on the day his son landed at London Airport. Mortimer took over.

Rehearsal In Father's Garden

On the day of the first round of the contest, with the bandsmen in their uniforms and the hired coach ready to leave for Bolton, Mortimer found there was time for one more rehearsal of the test piece, "Rhapsody In Brass." He took the band to his father's semi-detached house, called Rienzi after a piece of brass-band music, in Clifton Road, Elworth. The band stood in the garden and played "Rhapsody In Brass" while Fred Mortimer followed the score as he lay in bed in the downstairs front room. Harry conducted the band to victory: three months later his father died.

Harry gives his father all the credit for his own success. Three years ago he was appointed to the O.B.E. for his services to brass bands, but he says: "I should have been glad if my father had got it instead."

When Sir Ian Jacob, Director-General of the B.B.C., first met Mortimer he said: "I believe, Mortimer, that you are one of the happiest men in the Corporation." Mortimer agreed. "I sometimes feel ashamed," he says. "I am paid to do a job I love."

THE END

Julie clutched at my arm, her face white. "I won't let you go; I love you, Philip." I stared at her for a moment. Then, gently, I freed myself from her fingers

THE STRANGE LAND

by HAMMOND INNES

ILLUSTRATED BY LAURENT

Outside, the mob raged. I was no hero, but I had to face it—alone

HUNDREDS OF BERBER TRIBESMEN were wrecking our camp at Kasbah Foum, Morocco. Inflamed by Ali, their chieftain, they believed we had come to rob them of "great wealth." We could only watch, helpless, from the nearby gorge.

My name is Philip Latham: I used to run a British mission in the hills until it was destroyed by a landslide. I had come here with a Czech couple, Jan and Karen Kavan, and Julie, sister of my friend George Corrigan, who had been killed in the landslide.

Kavan, a refugee scientist from Prague who had been working for the British Government, had originally come out from England to be my mission doctor. Nerve-racked by threats against his family in Prague, he had entered Morocco, illegally—in a boat owned by a man named Wade. To avoid passport difficulties, he had used Wade's name at first: Bilvidic, the Sûreté officer investigating his case, still thought he was Wade.

I soon found out that Kavan had another reason for coming to Morocco. He had a legal claim to some old silver mines at Kasbah Foum, bequeathed to him during the war by a dying French officer, Captain Duprez.

Ed White, an American engineer, also interested in the place, was already working it when we arrived to support Kavan's claim. But the Berbers had turned against White, and he had thrown in his lot with us. So, too, had Kostos, a Greek who had been working for Ali.

Now, Ali was inciting his Berbers to attack us. They had already wrecked White's bulldozers. Suddenly Kostos went berserk. From the top of a high cliff, he hurled a lighted stick of dynamite into the mob below. It set off a box of high explosive. With a roar, the whole cliff face crumbled in a sheet of flame. . . .

FINAL INSTALMENT

Night On The Mountain

AT last the sound of the explosion began to diminish as the echoes reverberated back from farther and farther away. And just as a deep, mutilated silence seemed about to settle

on the gorge, there was a rumble like thunder out of the sky. I looked up. The cliff face above where Kostos stood was slowly, lazily toppling outwards. It was catching the reddening rays of the sun so that the rock glowed.

The sound grew in volume, a great, grumbling, earth-shaking roar. The whole cliff was toppling down, hitting the slopes below and rebounding. It was as slow and inevitable as a waterfall, and the dust rose like spray. Up above, Kostos twisted his body round as he looked upwards, seeing the ghastly thing he had let loose, but standing transfixed, knowing it was death that was pouring down upon him in the form of millions of tons of rock, and unable to do anything to save himself. And below, by the entrance to the mine, the men of Foum-Skhira stood dazed, barely aware of what was descending on them.

The rock mass moved like a tidal wave, and as it rolled it seemed to gather the mountainside with it, so that the whole slope on which Kostos stood was thrust over the lip of the cliff, taking him with it, still oddly standing erect, staring up at the main body of the landslide.

The whole gorge was suddenly filled by chaos. The sound pounded at the ground under our feet. The dust rose like steam as the mountain poured into the gorge, thundering and crashing and filling it with rock.

LONG after the movement had slowed and the weight had gone out of the sound, Ed and I lay where we had been thrown, incapable of action, stunned by the terrible vastness of it. It took an effort of will to turn and look behind, up the gorge, to see that the others were safe. Thank God, they were. They were in a huddle, as though clinging to each other, motionless.

I looked back again at the scene of desolation and felt slightly sick. The dust was settling now and the sunset colours on the mountain top were flaming into vivid beauty.

A high, piercing cry arose. The name of Allah. Down by the gorge mouth, clear of the outer spill of the slide, was a little knot of men. They were waving their arms and calling down curses on our heads. One of them, a big, bearded man, was shaking his fist at us and clawing his way towards us across the debris of the slide.

I turned and started up the slope of rock towards the others, shouting to Ed to follow me. We had to be out of that gorge by nightfall.

The trek out of the gorge was a nightmare. The sun was setting fast, and the five of us knew quite certainly that if darkness overtook us before we had climbed out of the gorge, we should be trapped there, and when dawn came we should be hunted down among the rocks of the mountainside and killed.

The ledge up which we were moving gradually narrowed until it finished abruptly at a sheer rock climb of twenty feet or more. It sloped slightly and there were hand and foot holds, but except for Ed we were all wearing shoes, and we had nothing with which to rope ourselves together. Below us was an almost vertical drop of some four hundred feet to the bottom of the gorge.

We paused there a moment, looking back. The slide filled the whole mouth of the gorge and the flood water was already building up against this natural dam to form a wider and deeper lake, red like a gaping wound.

There was no going back. We turned to face the cliff of rock that towered above us. "We'll never get up there," Karen said.

"Sure you will," Ed said cheerfully. "There's nothing to it." He made her take her shoes off. "I'll be right behind you."

As he climbed, his tough, rubber-soled boots gripping the rock, he encouraged her all the time, sometimes bracing her foot with his hand. He climbed down again to help Julie.

The sun had set before we were gathered at the top. The gorge was cold and dark now, and above us the slopes of the mountain seemed to stretch into infinity. We started up, climbing as quickly as we could. But we made slow progress. Julie slipped a great deal in her leather soles and Jan was obviously out of training.

"Latham!" Ed called back to me. "I'll go on ahead to find the track. It'll be too dark to see soon. I'll call directions down to you."

He climbed fast and in a few minutes he was lost to sight over the brow of a hump.

Darkness fell swiftly. We could hear Ed calling to us from time to time, but sound was deceptive, curving round the larger rock buttresses, so that we worked too much to the left and found ourselves up against a cliff. And there we lost touch.

I worked away to the right then, calling all the time. But a wind had sprung up from off the top of the mountain and we heard nothing. We were in an area where the rocks were piled in absolute confusion. Loose rubble slid away from under our feet and even some of the bigger rocks showed a tendency to move. And then, as I was climbing round an extra large piece of rock, my foot braced against it, the thing moved.

I shouted a warning to the others and clutched hold of the ground above me. The rock crunched as it moved. I could see it as a vague shape moving gently over on to its side. It hung there a moment and then moved again, dropping away out of my field of vision. We stood there, braced against the slope, listening to the sound of it crashing and banging down the mountain, gathering stones in its path, so that there was a rustling, slithering sound of rubble behind it. There was a heavy splash and then silence.

I knew then where I was. We were right out on the face of the new slide with the broken, crumbling cliff above us. There was a dryness in my throat as I glanced at my watch. It was already past nine. We had been clambering and stumbling across the face of the mountain for almost three hours.

We inched our way forward across the face of the slide, scarcely daring to breathe, let alone put our weight on to any of the rocks. Stones clattered down, setting loose little drifts of scree and dirt. Occasionally a larger rock shifted and then went bouncing and thudding down the slope.

It took us nearly two hours to cross the face of that slide. A little after ten thirty we came out on to undisturbed mountainside and lay there, panting and exhausted, with a bitter cold wind drying the sweat on our tired bodies.

AFTER that, Jan took the lead. We moved very slowly. He was just about all in and so was Karen. She was slipping a lot and she had cut her head on a rock. Her hand, when I helped her over a bad patch, was sticky with blood.

About an hour later, we heard Ed calling from higher up the mountain. The sound of it came to us quite clearly on the wind. But I knew it was a waste of breath to answer him, and we climbed doggedly on until we found the *piste*, the desert track.

I left the others there and trudged on up to the bend where the *piste* had been repaired. From that point I was able to make contact with Ed. A few minutes later he joined me.

"Thank God," he said. "I'd just about given you up."

We found the others discussing whether we should make for the Post or go on up over the pass towards Agdz. It was over forty kilometres to Agdz and the Berber tribesmen from Foum-Skhira could easily overtake us on the *piste*. But there would probably be a road gang working higher up the mountainside. There might be transport.

Ed shook his head. "It wouldn't be any good, I'm afraid. The reason you lost me was that I had to stop calling down to you. I'd almost reached the *piste* when I heard mules coming up from the direction of Foum-Skhira. They were Berbers and they passed quite close to me, about

Bilvidic flung himself against the door. The noise of

the mob outside was terrifying. "Up to the roof—quick!" he yelled. I pushed Julie on to the ladder

ten of them, going up towards the pass and riding hard."

That decided me. We headed downhill, back towards Foum-Skhira and the Post. It was then just on midnight.

It didn't take us long to reach the foot of the mountain, but from then on the going was heavy in the deep sand of the *piste* and our progress became slower and slower, our stops more frequent. According to the map it was five kilometres from the foot of the mountains to the Post, but it seemed infinitely farther and it took us nearly three hours. And for the last hour of that journey we could hear the sound of wailing from Foum-Skhira. It was a high-pitched, quavering sound, strangely animal in the darkness of the night, and it grew steadily louder as we approached the Post.

At last the dark shape of the first fort loomed up, the domed roofs curved like some Eastern temple against the stars.

From somewhere close at hand, a dog began to bark.

"Goddammit!" Ed muttered.

We were in the open space between the two forts now. The shape of one of the towers was outlined against the sky. We moved cautiously, not talking, Ed carrying his gun in his hand, and struck the beaten path that led to the Bureau.

The French truck was still parked outside. The door of the Bureau was locked.

"Let's try the sleeping quarters," Ed said. "Maybe your friend Bilvidic is there."

The guest rooms were built on to the Bureau in the form of an L. The door was locked and Ed beat on the wooden panels with the butt of his gun. The noise seemed shatteringly loud in the night stillness. The dog's barking became frantic. The sound of the wailing continued unchanged—insistent and agonized.

"We'd better try the house," Jan said.

Ed beat once more upon the door, without result, and we trudged, coldly, wearily, through the sand to the house. The dog barked his fury at us from the wired-in enclosure. Once more Ed shattered the night with the hollow thudding of his gun butt against wood. A window was thrown open and a voice demanded: *"Qui va là?"*

It was Bilvidic. I never thought I should be glad to hear his voice.

"I'll come down immediately," he said as soon as he discovered who we were.

It was bitterly cold standing there waiting outside that door. The sweat lay against my body like a coating of steel. The dog had stopped barking now and there was utter silence except for the sound of wailing which came to us loud and clear on a chill breath of wind. A light showed between the chinks of the heat-contracted woodwork of the door. The bolts were drawn back and there was Bilvidic. He peered at us in the beam of the torch he carried. "Come in," he said. His face was puffed with sleep and his voice sounded irritable.

It was as cold inside as it was out, except that there was no wind. "You must phone Agdz immediately," Ed said in his halting French. "They must send troops. Something terrible has happened." He glanced quickly round the room. It looked bare and chill in the hard beam of the torch. "Where's the telephone?"

"The telephone is broken," Bilvidic said. "It is cut when the *piste* is destroyed."

Bilvidic's assistant joined us then, blinking with sleep. Bilvidic turned to him. "Georges. Go to the Capitaine's room and bring the cognac and some glasses. First you have something to warm you," he told us, "and we get a fire lit. Afterwards we talk, eh?" He went to a door leading out to the back and shouted, "Mohammed! Mohammed! *Venez ici. Vite! vite!*" My estimation of him soared then, for

Continued on page 41

Danger—wreckers at work

by JACK ATACK

"A demolition man never knows what to expect," says Fred Hargrove. He tears down ruins with tractors and gelignite—but his best equipment is intuition

WHEN DEMOLITION EXPERTS were sent to pull down a bomb-damaged building in East London recently, a quick examination showed Fred Hargrove, the foreman, how to do the job. He saw that if one of the building's three main pillars were removed the whole place would collapse. A steam tractor was hitched with a steel cable to one of the pillars and driven forward. The support crumbled away—but the building remained standing.

Hargrove waited for ten minutes; then one of his men went to tie the cable to another pillar. Suddenly, Hargrove shouted a warning. The man ran back and, seconds later, hundreds of tons of granite and brickwork crashed to the ground—a load that would have buried him completely.

"I can *feel* when a building is going to collapse," says Hargrove, who claims that intuition is a demolition engineer's most important piece of equipment. "A builder knows that the foundations won't collapse, but a demolition man never knows what to expect."

For thirty-five years Hargrove, a slightly built man of fifty with a leathery face, strong hands and keen eyes, has been destroying objects that other men have taken months, sometimes years, to build. He alternates between caution and ruthlessness in deciding his methods. When he supervised the demolition of the bombed House of Commons Chamber in 1945, he ensured that each stone was removed carefully so that exact copies could be made for the new Chamber. More recently, he blew old gun emplacements to smithereens with gelignite.

He has hacked, drilled and burned his way through houses, hospitals, factories, cinemas, a town hall and part of the Bank of England. With weapons ranging from bulldozers to crowbars he has ripped up railway tracks and tram lines, and has dismantled piers, steel jetties, floating docks, bridges, gasholders, radio pylons and blast furnaces. His jobs—he does about two hundred a year—have varied between the demolition of the Liverpool Customs House, where 500,000 tons of stone and brickwork were moved, to the felling of a chimney pot on a country cottage.

Unseen Flaws Cause Accidents

His trade is so dangerous that insurance companies charge high premiums to cover risks. Fifty-three men were killed in demolition work in the last three recorded years, and 946 injured.

As chief demolition engineer for Charles Griffiths, one of Britain's oldest and largest firms of demolition contractors, Hargrove specializes in risky jobs. Though he tries to stave off disaster by scrupulously inspecting each structure, accidents occur through human frailty or through the invisible flaws that may lurk in the thickest wall. A hole through which debris was thrown was left uncovered and a worker on night shift plunged through it, breaking his ankle. A man sitting on a steel girder cut one end, not realizing the other was corroded, and crashed forty feet to the ground with it.

Once, four men were working on the eighty-foot wall of a half-gutted building when a huge stone broke loose and carried away five floors. The wall was left standing—but with no support. Hargrove ordered the jib of a derrick to be swung towards the stranded men, scrambled up with a rope and helped them to safety.

Sometimes he has a crew of eighty men, but he may also work with a single colleague. In the latter case, extra care must be taken. When he looked down from the top of a sixty-foot wall he was demolishing, Hargrove had the impression that the ground was moving. He leaped on to an adjacent wall—just as the first crashed to the ground. Another time, he was taking down a sixty-foot wall which was only nine inches wide; to get to it, Hargrove had to lower himself from the chimney stack of the adjacent building with a rope tied round his waist. He was hacking out the bricks with a mattock when the whole wall collapsed and left him swinging like a pendulum.

Demolition came into its own as a separate industry after the first World War and, during the blitz of 1941, demolition engineers kept the streets open. In some cases it has become a highly skilled art, and on one occasion a demolition firm dismantled a famous Irish castle piece by piece; then it was crated, shipped in sections to America and reconstructed.

Experts have a knowledge of engineering, building construction, explosives, labour costing, estimating and even geology. "But the job can't be taught," says Hargrove. "It can only be learned through long experience."

He has had to straddle girders to cut steel framework, swing three hundred feet in the air to dismantle wireless masts, and lie on his stomach, with a colleague holding his feet, to burn the bolts off coal conveyors. His work has taken him to almost every part of England and

From the top of a wall, Fred Hargrove looks of a burned-out building. Before they started he

Valuable fittings are the first to go from a condemned structure. Hargrove salvages a weather vane: the building will follow floor by floor

down on his men working in the smoking ruins made a thorough inspection for hidden hazards

Hargrove stands to watch a metal-cutting operation over a canal. One of his gang once burned through a corroded girder, and crashed to the ground. He himself has had many narrow escapes

Wales, and because of noise and the danger to traffic he frequently works at weekends and on holidays.

Dilapidated, bombed and fire-gutted buildings are dangerous, and sometimes Hargrove has had to tie up a front to prevent it from falling into the road during demolition. One building was so dangerous that it had to be dismantled from the top by men who worked from bos'n's chairs.

His jobs are often complicated by their surroundings. In a residential part of London, Hargrove was asked to demolish a massive vault —without making any noise. He solved the problem by pushing out vertical chunks of wall with a fifty-ton hydraulic jack. When a completely surrounded building had to come down in the West End he built scaffolding against the wall of a neighbouring building, and the debris was hoisted eighty feet, carried across the roof and shovelled through a chute to lorries below.

Stubborn Walls And Chimneys

The buildings Hargrove has worked on have shown a surprising range of endurance. To pull down a stubborn concrete wall he had to give it thirty tugs with a steam tractor. Another time a whole building came down like plaster after he snapped the seven stanchions that supported it. Chimney stacks have toppled when less than a quarter of the base has been cut away, and other stacks have had to be attacked with pneumatic drills after workers have hacked out three-quarters of the base.

Before Hargrove begins work, every inch of ground must be examined to make sure it can take the load he is felling. Gas and electricity mains must be located. Several years ago, he was bringing down a large stack in Hertfordshire when he fractured a gas main and plunged the population of Hertford and Ware into darkness. On another occasion, during demolition near a tobacconist's shop, a worker bent to cut a bolt with an acetylene torch; there was an explosion and, turning sharply, Hargrove saw flames shoot from a gas main under the building.

After Hargrove has studied the grounds, he shores up nearby buildings with timber to protect them against shock. "A falling girder," he says, "might shake the ground as much as a fair-sized bomb." The building is then examined for danger-spots—fractured walls and ceilings, weak chimney breasts, rotted or charred timbers, twisted girders, cracked arches and loose glass.

The greatest danger in demolition comes from falling debris. When workers were felling a 175-foot stack at a prison in the south of England several years ago, a four-hundredweight stone was levered out and crashed through the roof, two floors, the three-inch-thick arch of a cell, and killed a prisoner. "The debris should have been pushed down the inside of the chimney stack where it would have rolled out, harmlessly, below," says Hargrove, whose firm did not handle the job.

Normally, a chimney can be dropped on any given spot. The base is cut away and the position of the cavity governs which way the stack will fall. But occasionally, in spite of careful cutting at the base, a structure falls in the wrong direction.

To fell a church steeple, Hargrove rigged a line to a tractor. The tractor thrust forward and the steeple began to topple—but it fell backwards, dragged the tractor twelve feet, jerked it up on its front wheels and tumbled the driver out head first.

To reach the position of demolition engineer, workers must pass through the stages of labourer, cleaner, mattock man, top man and top man burner. A ground worker may average £9 for a forty-four hour week, with extra money for high-level work. Demolition engineers earn as much as £20 a week, including overtime.

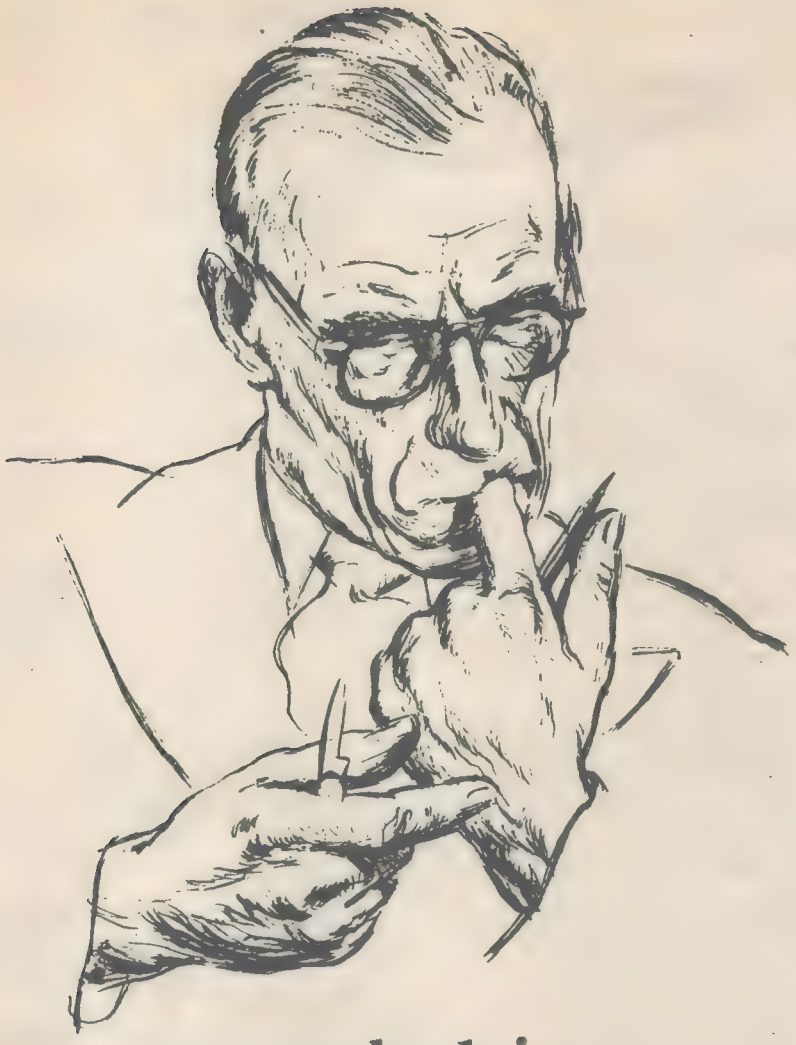
In some cases exceptional skill is called for—and a great deal of patience. During the war, Hargrove had to work on a steeple in Lewisham that had been split. It was so dangerous that traffic was slowed to two miles an hour. Flying bombs buzzed overhead as he hacked his way down. "Every time I saw a buzz-bomb I scrambled down to the church vault, waited till the ground stopped shaking, and then scrambled up the weakened steeple again."

Tons Of Shale Blocked Shaft

Underground work, too, has its perils. When Hargrove lowered himself two hundred feet down a disused mine shaft to recover scrap metal, the sides of the shaft wall caved in. Thirty tons of shale blocked his way out, and he had to slide down seven hundred feet of pipe and walk a quarter of a mile along a horizontal gallery to reach the main shaft, where he was hoisted to the surface.

Though demolition men usually have admiring spectators, the industry made a life-long enemy when a team pulled down a terrace in a south of England city. The condemned houses, the contract said, were Nos. 1 to 17 inclusive. Some time after the job was done, an evacuee returned to the city and searched the street for his home —No. 17. It had gone. The contract should have read: "Nos. 1 to 16 inclusive." THE END

JOHN BULL PHOTOGRAPHS BY ARTHUR WHITTINGTON



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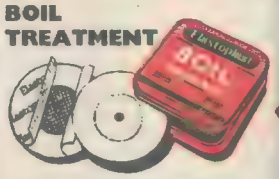

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THE BOSS MUST GO

Continued from page 20

lounge, that Anne said: "What is it, Dad? Is something worrying you?"

Entwistle was deep in his chair, staring moodily into the fire. He did not answer her, did not appear to have heard her.

"Dad," she said gently, "isn't there something I can do to help?"

"It's nothing," Entwistle said suddenly. "Business, my dear. And what business!"

There was silence for a moment and then Barry, Anne's husband, came into the room. "You know all about electricity," he said to Entwistle. "What's the matter with this?"

He handed over the switchbox of a toy electric railway. The cover was loose. Jim examined it for some moments before replying.

"There's a break in the wiring behind one of the contact studs," he said at last. "Somebody's wrenched it in taking the lid off, I should think."

"That's Barry Junior," said Anne. "I told him not to mess it about, but I might as well talk to the wind. He's had the whole business—engine, transformer and the rest—to pieces half a dozen times. He spends more time taking it apart than playing with the train. I've told him he'll electrocute himself one day, but it makes no difference."

"Got a screwdriver?" Entwistle asked. "I'll soon put it right."

But when the screwdriver was produced, he changed his mind. "I think I'll leave it over until the morning," he said. "Then I'll show young Barry how to do it for himself."

The result was that he spent half the next morning taking the toy railway apart and reassembling it again with Barry Junior.

As Topham drove him back to the factory there was a glint in his eye. The boy had a mechanical mind.

They stopped at a toyshop on the way, and he bought a large and very expensive model engineering set. No harm in letting the lad get some training young, he thought.

A week later, Hookham fired his first shot. He sent a letter to every shareholder asking for support for what he called "a reorganization scheme." International Financial Combinations would buy any shares in Entwistle's at ten per cent over the ruling market price, or expand the capital of the company so that existing shareholders could buy forty per cent of the new stock. The other sixty per cent, retained by I.F.C., would give them the control they sought.

With his letter, Hookham included ornately printed proxy voting cards. If enough of these cards came back to him with votes for either of his schemes, he would have the shareholders' meeting in the bag.

THERE was a grim, strained look on Maggie Williams's face as Entwistle dictated his reply to the Hookham scheme. When he had finished, she could not conceal her disappointment.

"You think it's not strong enough?" he asked her with a quizzical smile.

"Not strong enough?" she blurted out. "It's not strong at all. It's just a sensible little argument when you should be fighting tooth and nail to stop a crowd of cheats trying to run you out of your own firm."

"We'll fight back, Maggie," he replied quietly. "But we'll fight back my way, by arguing sensibly. By the way, you might add these words at the foot of the proxy cards we're sending out: 'This proxy cancels absolutely any other I may have given.' Then send the whole thing to my solicitors for them to vet it and make sure that it's cast-iron."

Three days before the shareholders' meeting, Entwistle called another board meeting. The day before, he had not been at the office at all. He had driven down to Suttergrange again and had spent the afternoon playing with the engineering set with young Barry.

There was a confident look on his face as he faced the other directors.

"I have just sent a cheque to International Financial Combinations for the amount of their loan still outstanding," he announced abruptly. "This will leave us short of ready cash for some months, but I have seen our bankers and they have agreed that we can have an overdraft if we need it, with the factory as security."

He leaned back in his chair.

"That is a very sudden step to take without consultation with the board," Hookham said. His voice did not betray any emotion.

"You think that I have exceeded my powers?" said Entwistle. Before Hookham could answer, he continued, "When this loan was first made, the board gave me full powers to deal with repayment. I took that precaution when I agreed to your joining the directorate. Those powers were never rescinded. So I have taken advantage of them. And if you are going to say that I should have notified you of my decision as a mere matter of manners, I can only point out that you did not have the courtesy to give me warning that you intended to circulate your damned 'reorganization scheme' to the shareholders."

"A cheque of that size needs the signature of two directors," Hookham said coldly. "May I inquire who countersigned it?"

"I did," said Charlie Bates with a huge smile. "And I'll tell you right now that I'll sign anything else that Jim Entwistle wants signed."

"The whole thing seems to me most improper," Hookham snapped. "And I don't see why the board should have any part in it."

ALL the time, Stone had been watching in silence. His eyes scarcely left Entwistle's face. He appeared to be trying to size up something in his mind. But at Hookham's last words he stirred uneasily in his chair.

"It seems to me that the board should do as the chairman suggests," he said. "I see Hookham's point, but it is a fact that we gave the chairman special powers in this——"

But before he could finish, Hookham broke in. "Have it your own way," he said to Entwistle with ill-grace. Without Stone, it was obvious that he could not get a majority. He gave Stone the look one keeps for traitors.

"I propose to have it my own way from now on," Entwistle said dryly.

Hookham's annoyance with Stone seemed to be short-lived. For later that afternoon, as the men were streaming away from the factory gates, Entwistle saw him give Stone a lift in his car.

Entwistle turned, smiling, to Maggie, who was standing at his elbow as he looked from the window of his room at the two below.

"I shall be working late tonight," he announced. "You don't need to stay. In fact, I'd rather be alone. . . ."

When Maggie came into his room the next morning and announced that Hookham, Grundy and Stone were waiting to see him, Entwistle showed no surprise.

"I hoped they might do this," he said cryptically. "By the way, while they're here, I want you to go over to the drawing office and ask them to dig out for me the blueprints of that Venezuelan generator job we did last year. I want you to wait for them and bring them back here."

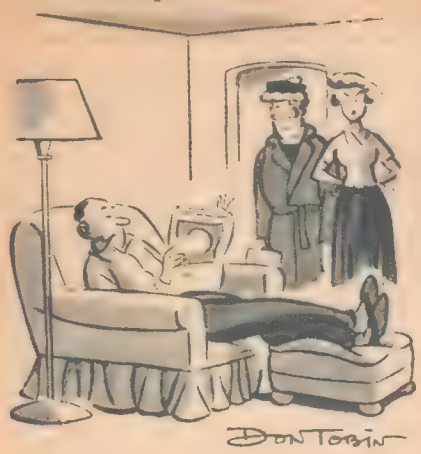
Maggie flushed angrily. So she was to be sent to the other side of the factory while the battle was on, so that she could not even hear it through the door from her own room. This was too much.

Big Jim saw that she was offended. He held her eye for a moment, but said nothing further until she had gone and the three directors had entered and taken their seats.

"Well, gentlemen," he said then, "what can I do for you?"

"I think it's time we had a showdown," Hookham began quietly. "I am willing to put my cards on the table first. I'd like to begin by saying that I.F.C. do *not* seek a situation where you are driven out of this business. And personally I want it even less. I know how valuable you are to this firm."

"That's very kind of you," Big Jim



"We've reformed him too much, Mother. Now, I can't get him to go out at all!"

---

said evenly. "I gather that you want me to stay here to run the business without having control of it?"

"We want to develop the business, certainly," Hookham replied. "We——"

"And if I don't agree?" Entwistle broke in. "After all, it's *my* business you're talking about."

"It *was* your business," Grundy interjected. There was a trace of a sneer in his voice.

So you want to climb on to the band-wagon before it's too late, Entwistle thought. Aloud, he said cheerfully: "That's better. I like people to talk like that. Grundy thinks it isn't my business any longer. In one way he is right. It belongs to me and a lot of other people who have worked for it—not to a financial group who know damn-all about it. And I'm reckoning on those people standing firmly beside me in this."

"Tell him!" Grundy said to Hookham.

Hookham paused before replying. There was a frown on his face. He had lost the initiative and he did not like it.

"What Grundy wants me to tell you," he said at last to Entwistle, "is that I hold proxy votes from practically all the workers in the factory who own shares."

Entwistle took it calmly. "I'm not at all surprised," he said. "You got your proxy cards out first. That's always an advantage. But they may be cancelled yet."

"Be your age, Entwistle," Grundy jeered. "*We're* offering the clots something. *You're* not offering anything. Times have changed. You're not Big Jim, the father of his people, any longer."

Entwistle appeared hardly to have heard him. He turned to Hookham.

"You talked about proxies," he said. "I gather that you mean you haven't succeeded in buying up these factory-owned shares, only in getting support for your reorganization scheme? From what Grundy says about the 'clots' on the factory floor—'clots,' I believe you said—they are holding on to their shares. Perhaps they aren't such clots after all."

STRUGGLING to keep the anger out of his voice, Hookham replied: "This is all beside the point. What we have come here to tell you is that the capital reorganization scheme is going through, and that we want you to face up to that fact and stay on as managing director."

"Again I must ask, who you mean by 'we'?" Entwistle probed. "Do you mean you and Grundy and Stone? Or your financial friends?"

Stone rose abruptly from his chair. "Excuse me" he muttered, and hurried from the room.

"I mean the three directors on the board who are backing this scheme, *and* I.F.C., who are putting the money up," Hookham explained.

"I can only say that I think it is a bad scheme and that I am not going to stay here if it goes through," Entwistle said quietly. "And I shall tell the whole factory that. We don't need any more capital of your kind—the kind that means that more and more people have to be given slices of the profits we're earning. Sensible people will listen to common sense."

"Right!" Grundy said. "Light up your silly little lighthouse now, put the loudspeaker on the air and tell them. You'll see what happens!"

Before Entwistle could reply, the phone on his desk rang. He lifted the instrument. As he listened, a look of surprise came over his face. Finally he said: "I'm glad you phoned," and replaced the receiver.

He turned back to Grundy.

"You dared me to light up the lighthouse," he said. He rose to his feet. "I don't have to light it up, Grundy. I changed the circuit on that instrument last night. The loudspeakers work without the light now. Everything that we have said has been heard all over the factory."

Grundy's face paled with rage. He half rose from his chair.

"Sit down, Grundy," Entwistle said. "That was Stone on the phone just now. He went back to his own room, he told me, because he couldn't stand any more of the kind of talk he was hearing from you. He phoned to say that he's sticking on my side."

"Good riddance!" Grundy's voice rose to a shout "We can do without him."

"Oh no, you can't!" Entwistle said. "Hasn't Hookham told you? Stone secretly bought a little block of shares I sold some years ago—the shares that give me a majority. You knew that, didn't you, Hookham? That's why you persuaded Stone to come into this with you, isn't it? Well, it appears that you've failed there, too."

Before Hookham could reply, the door was flung open. Maggie stood there, flourishing something in one hand, and looking excited.

"I just couldn't find those blueprints, Mr. Entwistle," she said. "So I brought these instead. You must see them at once!"

She held out a bundle of Entwistle's proxy cards—the ones that cancelled those in Hookham's pocket.

"Some of the men absolutely *insisted* on giving them to me," she told Hookham with a too-sweet smile. "And I think there are quite a lot more to come. Mr. Entwistle will be able to make quite a collection of them."

HALF an hour later, Stone and Entwistle sat together, alone in the room. "I wanted you to know I wasn't as disloyal as I appeared," Stone was saying. "I did honestly believe that you didn't care any more when I saw the way Hookham and Grundy were running the show. And . . . oh, well, things seemed to have changed, so I thought I'd better change too. Now that I've tried to explain, I'd like to hand in my resignation. You won't want me around any more."

"Oh yes, I shall," Entwistle replied. "What this firm needs isn't reorganization—it's plenty of orders. And you're the man who can get them. So you just get back to the job as quickly as you can."

Before Stone could reply, the door opened and Maggie came in with a fair-haired boy of ten at her side.

"Topham's arrived with Barry," she said. "I thought I'd better not keep him waiting in my room without telling you that he's here."

"Thanks, Maggie," said Big Jim. "You're right. Never keep an important visitor waiting. Meet Mr. Stone, Barry. This is my grandson, Stone. I've promised to take him round the works today."

"You picked the right day for the trip," Stone commented with a smile. "Is he going to be an engineer?"

"I hope so," Entwistle said. "What do you think, Barry?"

"I wish I didn't have to go to school first," the boy replied. "I'd like to start here now."

"Better go to school first," Stone laughed. "Your grandfather and I will keep a place here for you to come to when you've finished. Won't we?"

"We will," said Big Jim. THE END

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UNCLE THOMAS AND THE WALL OF DEATH

Continued from page 14

away. He covered the writing with one hand and looked up at me. And then he looked down again as though he couldn't meet my eyes.

He said: "I'm sorry, boy. We should have taken the bus."

He went on with his writing, filling the piece of paper with his pencilling. And when it was full, he turned it over and filled the other side. They had been married a long time and were very fond of each other.

"Have you got a bit more paper, laddie?" he asked me then.

I looked, but I hadn't.

"Ah, never mind, I'll use this," he said. And from his wallet he took a crumpled bill of some kind and it had a green sticky receipt label on one side. It was probably something he had paid that day. Before continuing his farewell letter to Auntie Rosie, he briefly scanned the bill side of the paper, almost as if taking a sentimental farewell of the things that went to make up a farmer's life. Even a bill could be precious when you were faced with death.

And it was then that I felt him stiffen. He held the receipted bill closer to his face.

"Put that light down a bit lower, laddie," he commanded.

I did so. He peered closely at the paper. And I could almost feel anger bristling from his neck.

"Ah!" he exclaimed. "Well! So that's how they make their profits!"

"They overcharged you?" I hazarded. I once saw a meek shop assistant accidentally short-change Uncle by a penny and Uncle nearly brought the shop down around his ears. And this seemed to be something far more serious.

"Oh, they're cunning!" he hissed. "I checked the total and that was all right. What they've done is put the same item down twice—one tin of brown paint three-and-ninepence, one tin of brown paint three-and-ninepence," he read out. "The cunning of it! But they won't get away with it——"

THEN he broke off. It had suddenly occurred to him that this was one time when they would get away with it. Unless a miracle happened, there would be nobody to question the bill.

"Tell Auntie Rosie in the letter," I suggested.

"That's no good," he said. "She won't say anything to them—at least, not what I want to say." Then he glanced round at the chalk banks and the water and the patch of sky far above us and it seemed as though he were seeing our predicament for the first time. Certainly he had suddenly acquired a new and burning incentive to stay alive.

"Get down in the water," he said to me.

I lowered myself in the water until I was standing alongside him, the cold stuff once again almost up to my chin. Then he said: "D'you think you can bear my weight for a few minutes, laddie?"

I said I would try.

Carefully he levered himself up between the bank and my shoulders so that I took only a part of the load.

"We'll be over there first thing Monday morning!" he said. "Three-and-ninepence is half a day's hard work and I'm not giving that to anybody."

The thought of going anywhere Monday morning was a heartening one to me. I thought that all of my mornings had gone. Suddenly, Uncle stood upright, one foot in the chalk, one on my shoulder. This put the water up to my mouth and I couldn't say a word of protest even if I'd wanted to. And I didn't. I could see that Uncle Thomas had something in mind; the awful possibility of losing three-and-ninepence had brought some hitherto unused brain cell to bear on our problem.

"Remember the Wall of Death?" he said.

I could only nod, and he couldn't see that.

"Well," he said, "this is it!"

And with those words he suddenly launched himself from my shoulder and went bounding round the steep chalky walls above the water.

HIS feet weren't in the chalk long enough to slide down. He bounced round in great, furiously energetic strides, his body almost horizontal above the surface of the water and me underneath him holding the flaring cigarette lighter above my partly submerged head. And as he went round and round, chalky lumps and dust cascaded down and I was almost choked by chalk and water, and soon couldn't keep my eyes on him.

I knew that he was rising gradually, though it seemed impossible that he could maintain such an heroic effort long enough to reach the top. But of course, with the three-and-ninepence in his mind and all the anger and outrage that went with it, anything was possible.

There came one last tremendous shower of chalk and then silence. I thought Uncle had fallen down into the water. But looking up, I saw his legs waving against the skyline—the top part of him was safely over the ridge. Then he cried down: "Are you all right, laddie?"

I shouted that I was.

"Good," he called back, and there was a wealth of triumph in his voice. "You won't be there much longer. I'll get down to the works for help. . . ."

Well, it was Uncle Thomas's meanness that got us into that trouble, and it was his meanness that got us out, which rather cancels out any grudge I might have borne him. There must have been a moral in it for one of us, but I never found it and I don't know whether Uncle Thomas did or not.

I do remember, though, how Auntie Rosie at first refused to believe that we had come near to death, and how Uncle Thomas showed her the farewell letter he had started to write, and how my aunt cried over it. In all their married life, she said, he'd never said the nice things which he'd put into that letter.

So some good came out of it, for they had another twenty-five years together after that.

And now here's this £600 which, in terms of man-hours, represents Uncle Thomas's lifetime, and I intend to make as much use of every penny as he would have done. THE END

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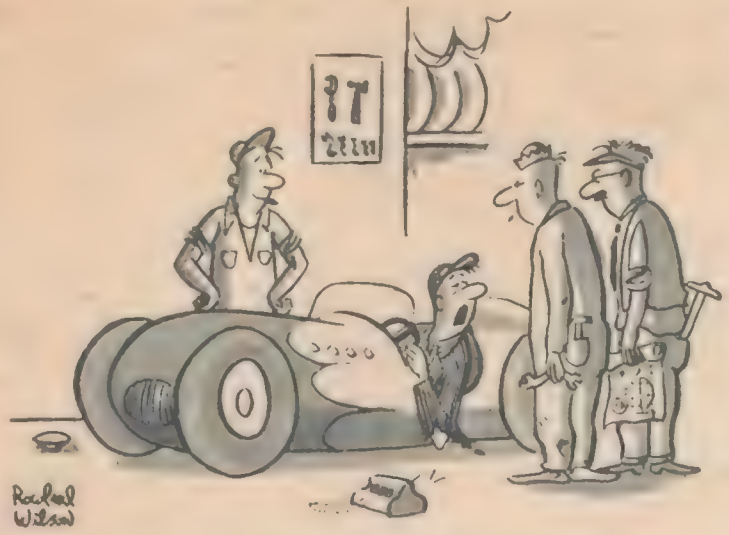
IN JOHN BULL NEXT WEEK



"I seem to smell smoke on left-hand turns"

REACH FOR THE SKY

Continued from page 11

and make little involuntary sounds.

At intervals that he longed for, the morphia gave brief relief and then the attack started again, focused round the blunt end of the stump, where some major nerve seemed to be stretched on a rack. His mother and other visitors came, but, obsessed with the pain, he could not talk properly to them and did not want to be bothered.

The pain kept on and after a day or two visitors were discouraged. The patient was going downhill again, losing weight rapidly, the face growing grey and waxy under the sweat and the eyes shrinking into the dark sockets. After a while his mind wandered into delirium, and they began to get worried and increased the morphia to a maximum so that he was unconscious for long stretches until resurgent pain or nightmares brought him out of it.

Bent Iron With Hands

It was nearly a week before the pain began to ease, and then one day when Joyce looked at the stump he said: "You've got a bit of haematoma here, old chap."

Bader was too exhausted to bother about what a haematoma was.

"Hang on to something," Joyce went on. "This might hurt a bit."

Almost before Bader was aware of it, Joyce was sliding something sharp into the wound, and in the shock punch of agony Bader grabbed the back of the bed in such a frenzied spasm that he bent the iron frame. The pool of blood that had been trapped tightly inside began seeping out, easing further pressure, and from that moment the last of the pain began to ebb.

The fluid seeped for ten days, gradually turning almost white before it stopped. By that time the stitches were out and the physical battle was over.

Then the mental battle started.

Perhaps it would not have been so bad if everyone had not tried so hard to reassure him. He himself had accepted that he was legless and in some ways the future was a challenge that was almost exciting. That perennially stimulating aspect made him eager to be out of bed and into the world to get at it; also a lot of encouraging pamphlets had arrived in the post from artificial limb makers and they had braced him.

Perhaps, through a little wishful thinking, he had read into them rather more than the authors intended, or perhaps they were too rosy anyway. At any rate, he had the feeling that when he got his new legs he would be able to carry on a reasonably normal life, not, perhaps, playing rugger, but playing cricket (with a chap to run when he was batting), maybe some squash, certainly walking and dancing (with a bit of a limp perhaps), and driving a car, of course.

And flying, too. No reason why not. Flying was mostly eyes and hands and co-ordination, not feet. He'd be able to stay in the Air Force. After all, he knew of a service pilot who had lost a leg in the war and still flew. Sister Thornhill used to come over and tell him about a friend of hers who had lost a leg and still played tennis. One leg. Two legs. No legs! What the hell! He had strength and balance and with the latest tin legs he would be quite mobile.

But gradually the drip-drip of grave but well-meant encouragement began to have a sinister effect. "Of *course* you'll be all right," they said. "Of *course* . . ." trying just too hard to be convincing, . . . "Of *course* they'll let you stay in the Air Force. . . ." (They'll *let* me stay. . . . Charity!) "Even if you can't fly, they'll let you do a ground job."

"For God's sake, they *can't* throw me out of the R.A.F.," he used to say. "I *know* I'll still be able to fly."

"Of course you will," they said soothingly.

The thought of a ground job while his comrades flew revolted him. They kept telling him about one-legged people who had made successes but he began to notice that no one seemed to know of anyone who had lost *both* legs and made a go of it. His mother said he was not to worry because she had signed a paper to look after him for the rest of his life, and his insides seemed to twist at the thought of always being dependent on her.

He began having dreams, and always in them he had his own legs, dancing or flying, playing rugger or running around doing all sorts of carefree things as he used to. It was a cruel shock when he woke and remembered where he was.

"I'd Rather Be Killed"

Dorothy Brace noticed he was getting less open and cheerful, and sometimes for hours would lie back with his eyes open, silent and moody. It worried her because she guessed what was happening. The first spoken sign came on a day when he heard that Johnson, a friend in the squadron, had crashed and was dead.

She said to Douglas: "You're darned lucky you didn't do that," and he turned his head and said bitterly: "*He's* the lucky one. He's dead. I'd rather be killed outright than left like this."

Sometimes he was his cheerful self and at other times, when he thought too much, the moodiness and silence would settle. He swung like an uncertain pedulum between the two. Out of the blue he said to Brace one day: "They won't have me back in the Air Force, you know. And they won't give me a pension because they'll say that the crash was my own fault."

"You don't *know* anything of the

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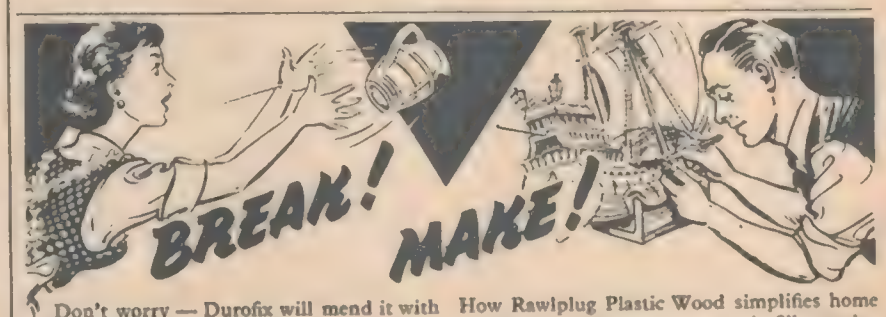

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sort," she answered with practical sense. "Anyway, you could still make yourself a new career in an office."

"An office," he said scornfully. "Shut up in an office all day, tied to a desk and getting constipated on a stool! There'll be no life for me if I have to leave the Air Force."

In one way separation from the Air Force would hurt him more than separation from his legs. The Air Force became a kind of symbol: return would mean that he was a normal man; rejection would mean that he was a helpless cripple.

Yet Brace was the only one who ever saw his depression and bitterness, and with unflagging warmth and an instinctive sympathy that never hurt she unobtrusively soothed, cheered and encouraged him in the way that is a woman's special gift. The two were so closely identified that they were virtually fighting the battle together (to such an extent that Bader ever since has claimed that Dorothy Brace saved his life).

He Had No Self-pity

To others, the other nurses, his mother, Hilda, Patricia, Cyril Burge or his squadron friends, he always put on a tough front, saying that he would rather lose both legs than one hand, that he was not disfigured, not helpless, and that he had seen chaps with one leg gone who were worse than he would be.

There was never any self-pity and he never looked back on his crash, thinking: if only I hadn't flown low. He *had* done it, and knew it, and it could not be undone. It was that attitude which made his future possible.

Only once he said wryly to Dorothy Brace: "Never do anything in a temper."

He took to reading his favourite poet, Swinburne, who appealed to some secret and cynical streak bred of juvenile hurt.

"Listen to this," he said once, and read to her the following lines from the "Hymn To Proserpine":

"Thou hast conquered, O pale Galilean; the world has grown grey from Thy breath;

We have drunken of things Lethean, and fed on the fullness of death.

Laurel is green for a season, and love is sweet for a day;

But love grows bitter with treason, and laurel outlives not May."

"He doesn't know love," Brace said, giving the woman's viewpoint. "I don't know whether you know it, but Hilda has been in love with you for a long time. The legs might worry you but they'll never worry her. She's ready to marry you, you know. You've only got to ask her."

"If Ever I Marry . . ."

"Yes," Bader said, "I know. She's so utterly decent and kind. If I asked her to marry me she would . . . out of pity. They're all stirred by pity and hers would last, but I couldn't face it. If I ever marry it's got to be someone I meet for the first time just as I am now. Or no one."

Then he covered up with a brazen laugh: "And if no one'll have me—hell, I'll marry *you*," which reduced her to demonstrative indignation.

Yet he was increasingly attracted to Patricia and she, in her own impulsive way, to him. About this time her mother took her away to South America for three months. Neither she nor Douglas had any illusions about the reason for the trip. Her mother liked Douglas in an abstract way but did not approve of her growing feeling for a legless man; a trip away might be the best solution. It was a practical thing for a mother to do but it hurt Bader for a while, increasing his moodiness.

Slowly he began to emerge from his brooding. A stream of affectionate letters from the ship helped and so did the prospect of artificial limbs, but the greatest and most constant factor in his endurance and resilience all through the months since December lay in his eternal and aggressive response to any challenge, the quality in him that is least elegantly and most effectively expressed as guts.

Soon he was up in the wheelchair again, and a week after that was stumping about the hospital garden on the pylon (luckily the left stump still fitted into the leather socket). Now it was late March, and stimulated by the sunshine, the early spring air and the first green buds, he was feeling eager to face the world again.

One day he went outside the main gate into Redlands Road, into the world again for the first time, and as he stood on the pavement a peculiar sensation of naked insecurity suddenly welled up as though a strong light were beating on him. He made himself stump a hundred yards down to the other gate and thankfully went inside again to the safe, home pasture. Trying it again that afternoon, he got the same feeling of exposed vulnerability as soon as he got outside the gate, and this time it was a shade worse because two people passed him, staring at the peg-leg and the right trouser leg pinned high above the knee. But after doing the same thing for three days the unpleasant feeling eased a little.

One important day Dorothy Brace and another nurse called a taxi and took him to a cinema in Reading, and he was like a small child bubbling with glee until the taxi pulled up outside the cinema. As he struggled out in a tangle of peg-leg, crutches and helping nurses, people stopped and stared: he did not see them until he straightened up, and then the cod-like eyes seemed to hit him. Clustered faces of pity and vacuous curiosity gave him the feeling of nakedness again, and he hobbled into the foyer shrinking from it.

Inside the darkened auditorium he sank into a seat and felt all right again, normal and belonging with all the others, but later, as he ran the gauntlet across the pavement to a waiting taxi, he heard a woman say: "Oh, look, Jean, he's lost both of them."

Dorothy Brace squeezed his hand in the taxi and said: "Don't worry. You'll get used to it."

After a few more days swinging along Redlands Road he found that he did, at least to some extent, being able to shut his mind to the curious stares almost completely.

In the middle of April came the time to leave Greenlands for good. He was still the Air Force's responsibility and they sent a car to take him to their hospital at Uxbridge. The nurses seemed more affected than the patient; most of them gathered on the steps, some in sentimental tears, and he kissed them all with his cheerful enthusiasm and was driven off to face whatever the future held.

Uxbridge was pleasant enough, but different. They were mostly male nurses, enlisted men, respectful but remote. In the ward, however, he was among old chums again; Flying Officer Victor Streatfeild with his arm in a cradle, Odbert, who had played rugger with him and was in with a slipped cartilage, and others of his own kind, all barely mobile "crocks" in some way so that he felt naturally at home among them. In fact, the R.A.F. *was* his home; no other place gave him the same feeling and it linked him again with the past to which once more he belonged.

For a few days the usual service restrictions irked a little, especially the hot day he stumped three-quarters of a mile to a group captain's house for "elevenses", and struggled sweatily all the way back to arrive five minutes late for lunch. At the door a senior doctor, a wing commander, greeted him testily: "Oh, Bader, I do wish you'd try to be on time for meals. It's an awful nuisance for the staff when you people come in late."

Mother Was Horrified

He said, "Yes, sir," and stumped into lunch fuming. It would never have happened at Greenlands; but then again, he thought philosophically, he would not have had quite the same companionship there. In any case, if he wanted to be a normal chap again he should expect that sort of thing.

His mother drove down from Yorkshire in the family car for a fortnight and took him for a drive most afternoons. The first time they went out she was driving along a quiet stretch of road in Windsor Great Park when he said: "Stop a minute, Mother, will you?"

She stopped, and he said: "Now let's change places. I'd like to have a crack at driving."

She looked at him in horror but he bullied her until before she quite knew what was happening he was in the driver's seat and she was sitting in the passenger's, saying: "But you can't. And what will happen if the police catch you?"

"We'll have a damn good argument," he said. "Now, just put your foot on the clutch, will you?"

After more vain protests she did so. He selected the gear (the car had a pre-selector gear on the steering wheel) and said: "Right. Now let it up." She lifted her foot slowly, he pressed his peg-leg on the accelerator and off they went.

It worked like a charm and as they went along he evolved a drill for changing gear. He would say, "Mother!" Her foot would go on the clutch, he would select the new gear, say, "Right," her foot would come up and that was all there was to it, apart from practice, concentration and co-ordination.

Drove With Umbrella

After a couple of hours the teamwork was quite good and his mother became enthusiastic. "What a pity you can only drive with a partner beside you!" she said.

Pondering this limiting factor he thought out loud: "If only I had something to prod the clutch with."

"Well, dear, would my umbrella do?"

"Yes! That's a wonderful idea."

She passed across her short, black umbrella, a very practical implement. He took it in his left hand, selected the next gear, held the wheel with the right while he felt for the clutch with the ferrule, pressed it down, let it up again and the car had changed gear smoothly. For several days he drove his mother like that and it seemed to

Consider your verdict

by

RUSSELL SCOTT, LL.B.

ALTHOUGH HE PAID £10,000 for the property, Mr. Cash was pleased with his house. Apart from the basement, it had three other floors; Cash himself lived on the ground floor, and he let the others off as self-contained flats.

On the other side of the narrow street stood an old mansion of two storeys. Soon after Cash bought his house, he received a letter from Jones, Ltd., saying that they had bought the mansion and would shortly tear it down to build a nine-storey block of flats. The same letter, with a plan of the proposed flats, went to all neighbouring property holders.

At once, Cash wrote an indignant letter in return. The flats, he said, would interfere with his right to "ancient lights."

"I have a right to the light which has been coming uninterrupted into this house for over twenty years," he argued. "If you put up this building, I shall suffer considerably. My flats will be difficult to let."

But Jones, Ltd., did not agree that their flats would appreciably diminish Cash's light—and they carried on with their scheme. They had erected the steel frame of seven storeys, and almost completed the first three floors when Cash sued them.

"I live with my family in the ground floor flat," he told the court. "Already we have to eat our lunch by electric light, and I have to switch on earlier in my other rooms. The basement tenant has to keep his light on all day."

Cash claimed an injunction to stop the completion of the flats, and to keep them down to the height of the former mansion. He admitted that, even if the building rose to its full height, his top two flats would be unaffected.

Jones, Ltd., insisted that they had acted reasonably. "We sent full warning of our intentions," they said. "This area has many flats, and many other residents are in a far worse position for light than Mr. Cash. It would be ridiculous if building development could be stopped because he has to switch on a few hours earlier."

What is your verdict? For the judge's decision, turn to page 34

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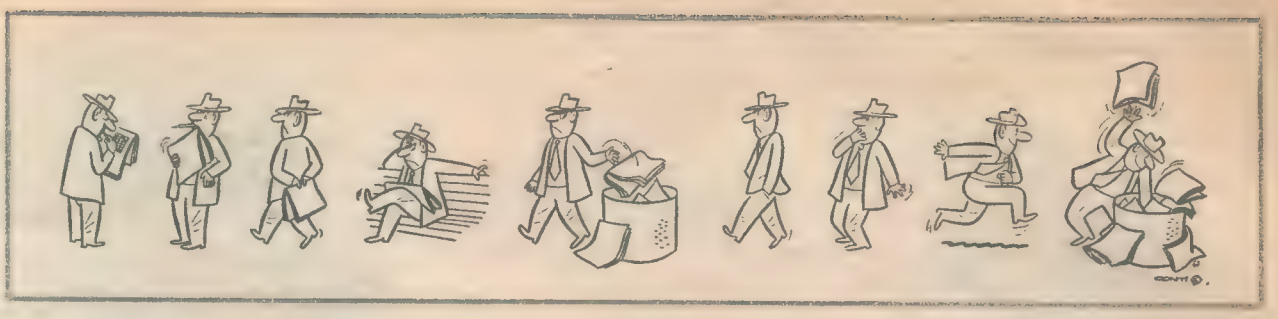

open new windows in his limited world. This was being normal!

But there was still a catch. He could use the umbrella only on a car with a pre-selector gear. There was no way on a normal car of working both umbrella and gear lever with his left hand at the same time.

Patients at Uxbridge were not supposed to have cars, but Peel, a young flying officer with a broken left leg in plaster, had an old Humber parked in a garage a few hundred yards away and he suggested to Bader and Streatfeild that they should go for a surreptitious spin. Peel's claim that he could still use his plastered leg on the clutch pedal turned out to be correct and cheerfully they cruised about the district.

As the car had a normal gear lever Bader had no ambitions about driving it until going through Windsor Great Park again he noticed that it had a hand throttle on the steering wheel. It occurred to him that a hand throttle would spare the peg-leg to work the clutch.

"I could drive this car," he said. "Pull up and let's have a go."

Peel very agreeably did so and left the engine running while Douglas slid behind the wheel. Streatfeild in the back started muttering: "If I'm going to have my arm broken again I'd rather have a surgeon do it."

Bader pressed the clutch down with his peg, put the gear lever into first, and let the clutch up again, working the hand throttle, and they moved off smoothly. After a while he found that changing gear with two movements of the clutch called for tricky co-ordination but with occasional crashes from the gearbox, winces from Peel, and insults from Streatfeild, he managed reasonably well, though in due course they ran into Slough where the traffic was heavy and he began sweating with the concentration of slowing, stopping, restarting and slowing as they moved jerkily and noisily in the stream.

Stop For Cup Of Tea

It was easier to try to keep the car moving at all costs, even if only slowly in first gear, so he ploughed remorselessly on, butting, weaving and honking, carving a kind of bow-wave of squealing brakes on other cars and pedestrians jumping like startled springboks out of the way. Shouts of abuse rose in their trail but they blundered on with Streatfeild leaning out the back yelling: "So are you! So are you! So are you!"

In due course, in great good humour, Streatfeild said: "It's four o'clock. How about stopping somewhere for a cuppa?"

"Good idea," Peel said. "Stop at the next place, Douglas."

As they came over a little bridge on the outskirts of Bagshot, Streatfeild said: "There's the Cricketers pub. Let's stop there."

But the pub was on the other side of the road and just as they neared it a stream of cars came the other way, making it too awkward for the unpractised driver to ease up and swing behind them, so he took the easy way and said: "Let's go on a bit. Bound to be another place soon."

Chance hangs on such slender threads. It was purely fortuitous that the other cars should be passing at that moment to force him on, but it was the luckiest thing that ever happened to him.

A hundred yards on he saw a sign hanging out on the same side as the car: "The Pantiles. Morning coffee. Lunches. Cream Teas." He eased the car and swung off the road on to the gravelled apron in front of an attractive converted barn with leaded windows, surrounded by garden, shrubs and ornamental trees. Outside, people, mostly elderly women, were sitting sedately at little tables in the sun sipping their cups and delicately pronging bits of cake into their mouths.

Streatfeild got out of the back with his arm in a cradle and they all looked up at him with mild curiosity. Peel stiffly clambered out of the front passenger's seat with his conspicuously plastered leg, hobbling with a pair of sticks, and the converging eyes softened in sympathy. Streatfeild leaned in, took the crutches out of the back and handed them to Bader as he got out, and when the women saw the third cripple emerge from the driver's seat and prop himself up on the crutches and a single peg-leg, the eyes stuck out like organ stops and an awed silence seemed to echo round the place.

Three Men—And A Girl

No one said a word while the three hobbled to a table as though everything were quite normal, sat down and distributed sticks and crutches around them. They looked up as a waitress arrived at the table and the interest of all three quickened.

She was a slim girl with a delicately modelled face and a sensitive, expressive mouth—very good looking. Bader was first off the mark, flashing his glowing smile and saying: "Can we have three teas, please?"

"Cream or plain?" asked the girl.

The three men giggled faintly. "Cream," Bader said. (He never forgot the first words that he and the girl spoke to each other. It always seemed such a ludicrously banal start.)

As the girl went away Bader said to the others: "And very nice, too!"

"Wonder if there are any more like her," Streatfeild said, looking round, but deciding soon that there were not.

The girl came back with the tea and laid it out in a faintly strained silence, conscious of being watched. Later when she came back with the bill Bader made a couple of facetious comments and once, briefly, she permitted herself a faint and dignified smile.

As the strange procession stumped back to the car everyone gaped again, especially when the one with the peg-leg got back into the driver's seat. With a grinding of gears the car jerked into motion and vanished into the traffic. The girl watched it go from the serving-hatch, feeling that the bold-eyed one with the peg-leg had an arresting personality.

On the way back to Uxbridge, Bader was both concentrating on driving and thinking about the girl.

Next day when his mother took him out he artfully contrived that they should arrive at the Pantiles for tea and sit at the same table. The girl came over looking more attractive than ever and after some cogitation and discussion his mother decided on cream tea. As the girl went away Douglas said as casually as he could: "That looks a jolly nice girl," but his mother only said absently: "Yes, dear. Rather a sulky mouth, though."

Bader concluded that she had not really noticed the girl at all.

A day or two later came the moment he had been waiting for. One of the Uxbridge doctors said: "It's about time you got your new legs, Bader. Your stumps should be all right by now so we're sending you over to Roehampton for measuring."

Roehampton was a hospital near London where the Ministry of Pensions carried out its obligations. In the grounds were several wooden huts occupied by artificial limb makers, some specializing in legs and some in arms. The R.A.F. car took Bader to the hut of the Desoutter Brothers, who used to make aeroplanes until Marcel Desoutter lost his leg in an air crash in 1913, and he and his brothers applied their inventive genius to the making of light-metal artificial limbs. Bader was introduced to one of the brothers, Robert, a short, thick, vivacious man with a big face and a shock of dark, grey-streaked hair.

"You *are* an ass getting both of 'em messed up," Desoutter said. "Let's have a look."

Bader took his trousers down and showed the stumps. Desoutter inspected them professionally and said: "By jove, those are good. Who did them for you?"

Bader told him about Leonard Joyce and added: "... so now if you can trot me out a pair of your pins I'll bung 'em on and get cracking."

"Ha, we don't take 'em off the peg," Desoutter said. "We tailor 'em to the stumps pretty carefully. It'll take a couple of weeks. How tall used you to be?"

"Five feet ten and a half in socks."

"I see." Desoutter did some measuring and then slid thin socks over each stump and slapped plaster over them. Ten minutes later when he slid the casts and socks easily off, not a single hair came away. Bader watched the procedure with interest, beginning to be fascinated by the business.

"I Want To Go Dancing"

"Right," said Desoutter when he had finished, "I'll let you know in a couple of weeks when we're ready for a fitting. Send me an old pair of your shoes so I can give you the right-sized feet."

"Get 'em fixed as soon as you can, would you?" Bader asked. "There's rather a nice girl I want to take dancing."

"We'll do the best we can for you," Desoutter said, thinking, incorrectly, that he was joking.

During those next two weeks Bader, unlicensed and uninsured, drove the Humber a lot in defiance of Air Force and civil regulations, becoming quite competent and usually steering it to the Pantiles for tea till it became a kind of ritual which Peel and Streatfeild bore tolerantly. The girl always served him and every day the little chit-chat between them increased, though legs were never mentioned.

She was becoming rather important to him and he was beginning to realize that the situation was raising a new mental hurdle. Driving a car with companions in the normal world had

Consider your verdict

IN the case on page 32, the judge agreed that Jones, Ltd., had given reasonable notice when they started their flats, and that they had argued well about building development. But Mr. Cash had a right to "ancient lights." The fact that other people around had less light was irrelevant. Although Cash was refused his injunction, he received heavy damages for the undoubted loss he had sustained. (*This is the probable verdict, based on actual cases.*)

"Can I go up and see daddy now?"

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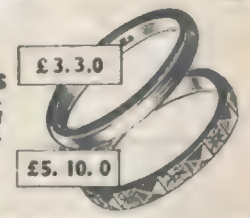

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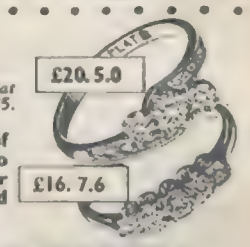

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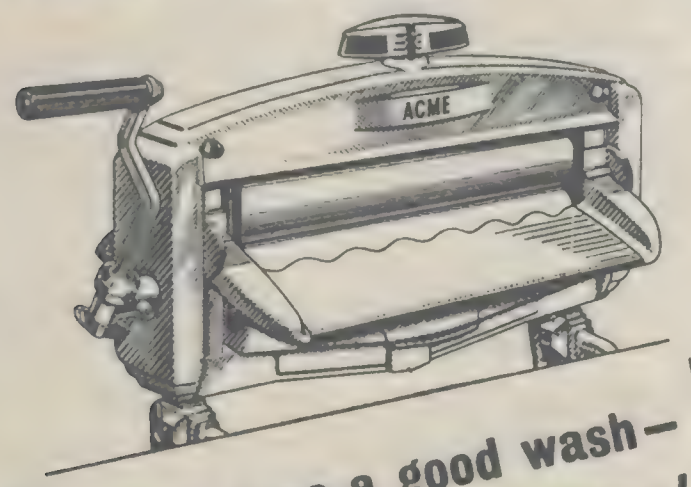

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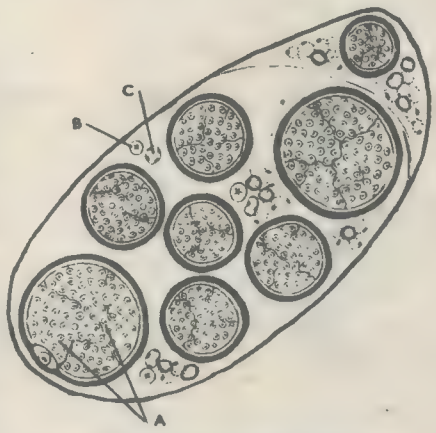
FACTS ABOUT YOUR NERVES

How 'NERVES' make us physically 'RUN DOWN'

ALTHOUGH when we become 'run down' it is usually physical exhaustion we mainly notice, the source of the trouble is very often in our 'nerves'. It is believed that our 'nerves', at some stage or other, influence the body and bring about certain physical changes which produce the intense fatigue, and other physical symptoms, that attack us when we are 'run down'.



Section of nerve trunk showing how nerve fibres run in bundles contained in sheaths. (A) Nerve Fibres. (B) Artery. (C) Vein.

Watch for these symptoms

You can usually recognise when your system is becoming 'run down' by your lack of energy, increasing tiredness, loss of interest in your job, poor concentration, insomnia and irritability, and by a growing feeling of deep mental and physical exhaustion. Whenever you notice these signs the proper thing to do is to put yourself on a course of Sanatogen.

The Sanatogen treatment

If your 'nerves' can be made healthy, then your 'run down' condition should correct itself. Nerve and body cells, we know, depend for their growth and health—and that means *your* health—upon an adequate supply of protein and phosphorus. Without these substances your nervous system cannot function properly and nerve cells would 'starve'. To restore and promote the activity of such 'starved' cells you need the extra protein and phosphorus that Sanatogen gives you. By giving this extra 'boost' to your body and nerve cells Sanatogen helps to correct your 'nerves' and to restore strength.

How you take Sanatogen

Sanatogen is a very fine powder. You take it, mixed with a little water or milk, three times a day, with or between meals. Remember, it may have taken months for your body to get into a 'run down' state. Obviously, this cannot be remedied just overnight and it is important that you take Sanatogen regularly for at least eight weeks. Each day Sanatogen will put back into your body a little more strength, a little more vitality, rebuilding your system and restoring your energies. So when you start Sanatogen, make sure you get the full benefit from it by taking the complete eight-week course.

Doctors' opinions

More than 25,000 doctors have endorsed the use of Sanatogen—a remarkable official recognition of its restorative power. Sanatogen is unique in form and composition and is the standard, accepted tonic for all cases of 'nerves', irritability, over-tiredness and mental and physical strain; in fact, 'run down' conditions generally.

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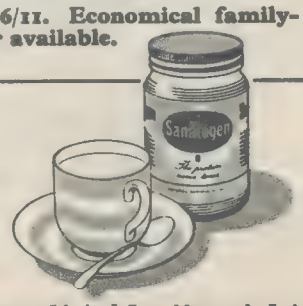

Sanatogen

THE PROTEIN NERVE TONIC

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"Well, *make* room for it!"

lifted him out of the bitter moods of Greenlands but a girl, in a serious sense, was a different thing altogether. Though not depressed he was well aware that his future relationship with life was uncertain and somehow he did not feel justified yet in making any sort of advances.

With confidence and bravura he could pat any other girl's bottom and kiss her till she giggled and said, "Stop," unconvincingly, but this girl was different and disturbing. He wanted to make advances and yet shrank from it, feeling that first he must sort things out, and also not wanting to spoil things by an ill-timed approach. All very complicating. Besides, there were Hilda and other girls, and affectionate letters coming from Patricia in South America. Outwardly as brash as ever, he was confused inside.

The new legs might be his solution—when he got them! He yearned for the day they would be ready and he could put them on and walk out of Desoutter's hut, free and exultantly independent again, almost like he used to be, except, he supposed, for a bit of a limp. He could stand with other people, with equality and with the blessing that they did not have of appreciating what it meant to be like them, however ordinary. He would drive his own M.G. straight to the Pantiles, walk in with full-length trousers and no crutches and sit at the old table. Then it would be different. He wrote to the garage at Kenley where the little M.G. was stored and told them to change the brake and clutch pedals and have it ready.

His Shiny New Legs

Desoutter rang one day. He was ready for a fitting.

The first thing Bader saw when he stumped on the pylon into the hut were the new metal legs standing up incongruously without a body by the wall. Unpainted, they looked shiny and new and covered in little rivets, nuts and screws, and he was amused to see that they wore socks and his own shoes.

"Ah," said Desoutter, "handsome, aren't they? Look at those muscular calves."

Bader grinned.

"You'll be about an inch shorter than you used to be," Desoutter went on.

The grin faded. "Why?" Bader demanded indignantly.

"Gives you better balance. We always do that. If you want them longer we can always lengthen them."

"As long as I can be as tall as any girl friend."

"You can marry an Amazon if you like," Desoutter said. "We can make you seven feet tall."

They went into the fitting-room, a long, rectangular place with large mirrors at the end and what looked like parallel bars, but so low that a man could walk between them, holding on to the bars for balance. A middle-aged very fat man was standing there in shirt tails with a strap over one shoulder and a belt round his bulging abdomen to which a tin leg hung by straps. He looked so odd that Bader said with youthful and tactless impudence: "I must say you look damn funny."

Justifiably annoyed, the fat man said: "You won't think it so damn funny when you try these things." He stumped clumsily along to the far end and began pulling on his trousers.

"Sit down here." Desoutter indicated a stool and Bader, with a hand grabbing a crutch and another on the stool, eased his rump on to it and began the aggravating task of wriggling his trousers down over the buttocks he was sitting on.

The First Steps

Desoutter introduced two of his white-coated assistants, a jovial little man called Charlie Walker, and Tulitt, a big man with glasses. They made him strip to vest and underpants and then Walker, the "below-the-knee" specialist, pulled a short woolly "sock" over the left stump and slid it into a leather socket sunk in the calf of his new left leg. Above the calf, metal bars came up on each side like the ones on the peg-leg, hinged at the knee and ending in a lace-up leather corset. Walker laced the corset round the thigh.

"You'll find it a bit different from the pylon," Desoutter said. "You've got ten inches of fairly rigid foot sticking out at the bottom and you'll have to lift your leg a bit higher to get the toe clear."

"All right," Walker said. "Hups-a-daisy." He put the crutches under Bader's armpits and he and Tulitt helped him up.

Bader stood firmly on the leg and it felt fine. Just fine. Much more solid, somehow, than the pylon. Leaning experimentally on it he felt a slight "give" in the foot and Desoutter explained that it was hinged at the instep with little rubber pads inset to allow a faint, resilient movement. The toe was jointed with a rubber pad, too.

Confidently, Bader took a pace forward on the crutches and the wooden left toe caught on the mat and he nearly tripped.

"See what I mean about the stiffish foot?" Desoutter said.

He tried again, lifting his leg like a high-stepping horse, and walked up and down the room like a one-legged man with crutches. "Right," he said with satisfaction. "Let's have a go at the right leg."

Tulitt brought it over. The thigh was a shaped metal cylinder that came right up to the groin and strung to it

were straps leading up to a thick belt, with more straps looped on the top like a double military Sam Browne. Tulitt pulled a "sock" on the right stump, eased the stump into the deep socket of the thigh and then buckled the belt to which it was attached round Bader's lower abdomen over his underpants. Over each shoulder he buckled the leather braces and then strapped the thigh corset of the left leg to the body-belt.

Bader sat in growing dismay, feeling he was being trussed into a strait-jacket. There seemed to be strap after strap and he felt irksomely constricted and uncomfortable.

"I'm afraid you'll have to have all this harness," Desoutter said, "but you'll get used to it. Everybody does."

Tulitt stepped back. "All right," he said. "You'll do. No, never mind the crutches. Hups-a-daisy."

This was the moment!

A Cry Of Despair

Walker and Tulitt took each arm round their shoulders and hauled him to his feet for the first time. As his weight came on both, especially the right stump, it was the worst shock he ever had. He felt absolutely hellish, wildly unbalanced and strange. His right stump was utterly helpless and uncomfortable to the point of hurting, and the harness itself seemed to cripple him.

In stung despair he burst out: "Good lord, this is absolutely impossible."

"That's what they all say the first time," Desoutter said. "You get used to it. Don't forget your right stump has done no work for nearly six months."

Bader said grimly: "I thought I'd be able to walk out of here and start playing games and things."

"Look," Desoutter said gently. "I think you ought to face it that you'll never walk again without a stick."

Bader looked at him with tense dismay, and then as the challenge stirred him he said pugnaciously: "Damn that! I'll never, *never* walk *with* a stick!"

In his stubborn anger he meant it.

"Try a step or two," Desoutter suggested.

Feeling he would be more secure staying on the left leg he tried to swing his right leg forward, but it did not move.

"How the hell do I get it to move?" he demanded.

"Try kicking the stump forward," Desoutter said. "The right knee will bend automatically. Then when it's forward, kick the stump downwards and it'll straighten out on the heel. It's like cracking a whip."

He kicked the stump forward and the metal knee bent as the leg went forward. He jerked the stump down and the knee straightened as the heel hit the mat.

"That's better," Desoutter said. "Now come forward."

"I Can't Move!"

Bader suddenly felt paralysed, unable to move. It was like having a chair back stuck under a door handle.

"How the devil *do* I?" he asked irritably. "I *can't* move."

"That's the big lesson you've just learned," Desoutter said. "You haven't got any toe or ankle muscles now to spring you forward as you used to. That's the secret of it. Or the catch. That right leg is a firm barrier that you have to push yourself over, on top of, by leaning forward and by your momentum when you're moving."

Bader said to Tulitt and Walker: "Pull me forward over this damn leg."

They heaved him forward till he was precariously balanced on the weak right stump. Having his own knee, he was able quite easily to swing the left leg forward and then he stuck again, unable to push forward with toe and ankle.

"Pull me, for God's sake," he said.

They pulled and he flicked his right stump forward again, and they pulled him on to it and he got his left leg forward once more; so it went on in clumsy, stiff, jerky movements as they

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pulled him the length of the room. There was no natural automatic movement at all; he had to think each step out in advance and then signal his mind to make the move. Whenever they eased the forward tug he felt that the stiff leg out in front would push him over backwards.

At the end he lowered himself on to another stool and uttered with grim feeling: "This is awful."

"It always is the first time," Desoutter said. "Don't be too depressed. The first steps always feel like that. It's learning to walk all over again with an entirely new system and you can only learn it by practice, like playing the piano. Don't worry. You'll do it, but it might take you six months."

Bader looked at him with a humourless grin. "Don't be silly. There's a girl I want to see in a couple of days and I want to be walking on these things then."

Desoutter broke a slightly appalled silence: "You'll find a stick useful in pushing yourself over the leg in front."

Bader stuck his jaw out aggressively. "Not me! Come on, you two. Let's have another go."

They hauled him to his feet again and this time they supported him by his elbows. "Try taking very short steps," Walker said. "It'll be easier to lean forward over a short step."

He tried taking short steps—one of the real secrets at the beginning—and the improvement was immediate. They still had to pull him forward, but he did not get quite the feeling of coming to a dead stop whenever he put a leg forward, especially the right leg. They went up and down the room several more times and slowly, subconsciously, he began to get the hang of it, leaning the top of his body well forward so that his unbalanced weight tended to carry him on to the leg placed just in front.

"Keep Your Damn Sticks"

Desoutter said after a while: "Let's try taking half an inch off that right leg. Might make it a bit easier."

Bader sat down and unstrapped it. Walker and Tulitt took it away for half an hour and lowered the thigh about half an inch into the knee socket. Bader put it on again and without so much height to overcome found that he could transfer his weight with a little less trouble. It was not so much that it was easier but just a little less impossible, still wildly clumsy and unnerving.

They helped him up and down the room several more times and then he said: "All right, now let me go."

They were too cautious to do so, so he shrugged his elbows to push them away and took his first steps alone, three or four jerky stumbles that ended with him just grabbing the parallel bars before he fell over. He hung on to them, grinning all over his face where the sweat was shining again. Turning to Desoutter, he said: "There you are. You can keep your damn sticks now."

Desoutter was laughing in genuine delight. "I've never even seen a chap with *one* leg do that before first time," he said. Walker and Tulitt were openly surprised, obviously not pretending.

"I think you've done enough for today." Desoutter said. "You must be feeling pretty tired."

That was true enough. He was hot and sweaty, beginning to feel exhausted, and the right stump was stiff and sore. As he strapped on the peg-leg again Desoutter suggested he come back for more practice a couple of days later; meanwhile he would "pretty up" the legs with paint and other finishing touches. Bader got up with his crutches to leave and this time the peg-leg felt strange in an unpleasant way, unsteady and uncomfortable.

Legs In Smart Yellow

Back at Uxbridge, when he hobbled in, Streatfeild bellowed: "Hallo, here's Long John Silver again. I thought you were coming back on your own two pins this time."

"I was going to," Bader said, "but I forgot to take a clean pair of socks."

Thinking in bed that night, he did not feel so flippant. It was not at all as he thought it was going to be. Little needles of doubt were pricking him. He supposed, a little doubtfully, that it would be all right with practice.

Back at Roehampton in a few days he found the legs painted a smart yellow. "Looks more natural than any other colour through a thick sock," Desoutter said. "Don't ask me why."

Walker and Tulitt walked him up and down the room again and it was still hellish, but not quite as bad as the first time he had tried. After a while he made them loosen their grip and with their hands hovering by his elbows he was able to walk the length of the room. Standing facing the wall he found a new problem—he could not turn. In exasperation, hands steadying him against the boards, he said to the wall, "What the hell does a man do now?"

The others turned him round and back at the parallel bars the same thing happened. It seemed impossible to turn his feet round. He lurched back to the other wall and this time as he neared it he teetered round in a tight semi-circle, fending himself off against the wall. For two hours he practised that morning, until he was almost too tired to stand.

"I honestly think you're incredible," Desoutter said as he unstrapped the legs. "None of us has ever seen anyone like you before."

Walker and Tulitt inspected the stumps for raw patches or chafing, but they seemed all right. Bader wanted to take his legs away there and then, but Desoutter said there were still a couple of adjustments he wanted to make.

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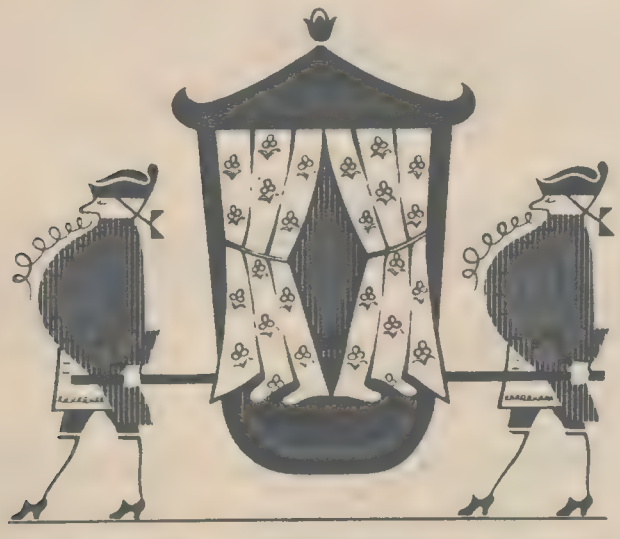

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when Bader drove back to Roehampton to take delivery and his spirits were soaring at the prospect. He thought it must be the way a woman felt on her way to pick up a new fur coat.

Desoutter had a set of three shallow wooden steps with banisters in a corner of the room and when Bader had put the legs on and tried a couple of circuits round the room, he made his first attempt at the steps. With the banister to support him, it turned out to be relatively simple—hand on the rail to steady himself, left foot on the first step, bring up the right foot to the same step, and then lift the left foot again. Thank God he still had one knee left to raise himself with or it would have been impossible. Coming down was the same thing. He called it the "dot-and-carry" system and has never used any other for stairs.

That morning he learned how to get up out of a chair without help, too—lean forward, a good shove on the seat of the chair with both hands and the left knee took the strain and lifted him.

"Well, there you are," Desoutter said. "They're all yours. It's a bit soon to let you have them really, but I suppose you'll only start complaining if you don't take them." He grinned. "Shall I wrap them for you?"

"Not on your life," Bader grinned back. "I'm walking out on 'em. Here, catch this. . . ." He threw him the peg-leg and nearly fell. "You can do what you like with that."

"Now what about a stick," Desoutter suggested persuasively.

"Never!" he answered. "I'm going to start the way I mean to go on."

Like An Ordinary Chap

For the first time he began putting the rest of his clothes on over the legs and harness, the shirt over the belt and shoulder straps, the trousers over the legs. Ah, here was another catch! He had to lift the right leg with a hand round the thigh to do it, and then found that with the foot sticking rigidly out he could not point his toes to slide into the trouser leg. The heel and toe caught and he had to ease the foot through the cloth by tugging on each crease alternately.

"Oh, another point," Desoutter said. "Never try to walk barefoot. It's difficult and you'll probably fall flat on your back. You'll notice that the feet slope down at a slight angle. That's because shoes have thick heels and you'll always need a heel underneath to put you on an even keel."

He put on his tie and jacket, stood up and, teetering round, looked at himself in the mirror. He looked *quite* normal. It was a terrific moment. Heart-swelling! He was *standing up*—dressed like an ordinary chap, looking like one. And, after several months, suddenly feeling like one again. Perhaps he looked a bit shorter than before, about five feet nine and a half now, so that the trousers crinkled slightly at the ankles. A detail.

With great satisfaction he said: "It looks damn good to be standing up like this again."

His Harness For Life?

As Walker and Tulitt helped him to totter out to the waiting car he became irksomely conscious of the harness. Under his clothes it seemed worse than before, cripplingly uncomfortable, as bad as walking with a stone in one's shoe—in the circumstances a ridiculous comparison, he thought wryly. But he'd have to wear it for the rest of his life! A grim thought. Maybe he'd get used to it. . . .

As they handled him into the car, Desoutter said: "Don't worry if you have a bad time for a while. You've done amazingly well so far, but don't expect it to go on as fast as that. Everyone feels desperate for a while."

They shouted "Good luck!" through the glass and the car moved off. He relaxed, satisfied, on the soft seat—and discovered a new catch. He could not cross his legs.

NEXT WEEK: How Douglas Bader battled to master his new legs. "Reach For The Sky" is published as a book by Collins, at 16s.

"I don't see how we can disturb them"

THE STRANGE LAND

Continued from page 25

he must have been consumed with curiosity, and a man is seldom at his best when rudely awakened in the small hours.

Mohammed came and was ordered to produce a fire immediately. We moved into Legard's study. Paraffin blazed in the wood-piled grate, and Bilvidic handed each of us a quarter tumbler of neat cognac.

"*Eh bien!* Now we will talk. What happened last night at Kasbah Foum? There were rumours that the Caid was dead and that several *indigènes* had lost their lives. What happened, monsieur?" He was looking at me.

I told him the whole thing then, sitting there by the fire, sipping my drink, my body gradually relaxing.

WHEN I had finished, he sat quite silent for a long time. He was frowning, and his fingers were beating a tattoo on the desk where he was seated. At length he said to me, "Do you know this country? Do you understand the people here?"

"No," I said. "This is the first time I have been south of the Atlas."

He clicked his tongue. "That is a pity, for I also do not know it. This is a military area and there is seldom any reason for us to come down here." He paused. "The question is—what do we do? Soon they will know that you are here."

"If we could get to Agdz," Ed said.

But Bilvidic shook his head. "Unfortunately, the only vehicle here has something the matter with it. And you cannot go on foot. It is a long way. Also, it is too dangerous." He lit a cigarette, and started pacing up and down, taking quick, nervous puffs.

I leaned back and closed my eyes. The drink and the warmth of the fire was enveloping me with sleep. I seemed to slide away into darkness, engulfed by a beautiful lethargy.

I awoke to the sound of voices raised in argument. I opened my eyes and blinked in the brilliance of the light. It was morning, and the room was full of sunshine.

Jan lay asleep in the chair opposite me. The grate was piled with wood ash. A single log was still burning, its flames obliterated by the brightness of the morning sunshine.

"I have sent a messenger to Agdz by mule," Bilvidic was saying. "What else can I do?"

"But it'll take him all day to get there!" Ed cried.

"What's the trouble?" I asked.

Ed swung round. "Take a look out of the window!"

I crossed the room and peered out. The open space between the forts was full of people. They stood or sat in little isolated groups, silently watching the house. And from the direction of Foum-Skhira came the sound of tam-tams beating. It was a sound without rhythm, an insistent, urgent tattoo.

"There is nothing any of us can do now," Bildivic said quietly, "except wait here and hope they do not attack."

"Attack?" I stared at him, my brain still dulled with sleep.

He nodded his head slowly. "Yes. I have just had a visit from Hassan, the Caid's second son—who, now the old man is dead, is in fact the Caid. He came at some risk to himself to warn us that he had not the influence to hold his people back and that we were in imminent danger."

He swung round at the sound of the front door opening. It was Georges, Bilvidic's assistant. He carried a rifle slung over his shoulder.

"You found the armoury then?" Bilvidic said.

Georges shook his head. He had searched the Bureau building, but had failed to find it. The rifle he had found in the orderly's room, but there had been no ammunition with it.

BILVIDIC went through into the main room where Julie and Karen were peacefully asleep in easy chairs with blankets wrapped round them. He pulled open the door leading to the back premises and shouted, "Mohammed!" There was no answer.

"Looks like he cleared out while the going was good," Ed said. "Isn't there somebody else around here to tell us where they keep their weapons?"

"Only the orderly," Bilvidic said. "And that is the man I sent to Agdz."

"You should have found out!" Ed shouted at him angrily. "We told you there'd be trouble. We told you that a party had been sent out into the mountains——"

"Yes, yes, but that does not mean they will attack a French Post. It is many years now since a Post was attacked."

He stopped sharply and cocked his head. The tattoo of the tam-tams had ceased and in its place was the single, menacing beat of a drum giving the time to an army on the march. We went to the window. They were coming up out of the *palmerie* just to the left of the *souk*, a great mob of people flowing over the sand towards the house like a tide. There must have been a thousand or more, including the children running on the outskirts. I felt my heart hammering and my mouth was dry.

"What are we going to do?" It was Jan. He stood, looking first at the two sleeping women and then through the open door at the advancing mob. He rubbed his eyes, half-dazed with sleep, blinking owlishly. "Shall I wake them?"

"Let them sleep on," I said. "There's no point in their knowing about this till they have to." I turned to Bilvidic. "Exactly what arms have we got?"

He put his hand into his pocket and brought out a French service pistol which he tossed across to me. "That is Legard's. We have plenty of rounds for that. Also, Georges and I have each a pistol with a full magazine and one spare."

"And I have my automatic," Ed said.

Four pistols! I stared out of the window at the approaching mob.

"I think," Bilvidic said, "that you should get all your people upstairs." He was staring at the advancing mob, searching it with his eyes narrowed over their little pouches. "I do not think they have a leader. Without a leader, they will not attack unless they are given cause. They have only been told that you are here. They do not know. And if they do not see you, then they will begin to doubt and lose their nerve. Get your people upstairs." His voice was more urgent now. "*Vite!* Hurry! And do not show yourselves at the windows."

I woke Julie and Karen and bundled them up the stairs, explaining to them as we went.

Jan followed close at my heels and Ed was behind him.

THERE were Venetian blinds in one of the upper rooms, and through the slats we watched the mob spreading round the house. The people who had been watching and waiting in the space between the forts moved into the herd as though drawn by instinct. The inarticulate murmur of the mass gradually died into silence.

A buzzer sounded downstairs, stopped and then started again. I heard the scrape of a chair on the tiles and then a man's tread as he crossed the main room towards the study.

"By God, it's the telephone!" Ed cried. "We're through to Agdz." And he went clattering down the stairs. I shouted at him to stop, but all he said was, "I want a word with the Commandant myself."

"Ed! Come back!" I flung myself down the stairs after him.

The stairs descended into a recess between the main room and the study. As I reached the bottom, Ed was already in the study. Bilvidic was seated at the desk with the field telephone pulled in front of him and the receiver to his ear, and behind him, framed in the window, was the lined, gaunt face of an old Berber. He was staring into the room, and as he saw Ed moving towards the desk, his mouth opened slightly to reveal a solitary tooth, like a fang hanging in the muzzle of an old dog; and then the face was gone and I heard Bilvidic saying, "*Oui, oui, tout de suite.*"

"Let me talk to him," Ed said.

Bilvidic waved him away angrily. "Get back upstairs."

There was the sudden crack of a gun and a splintering crash. A bullet thudded into the woodwork above my head. Glass from the shattered window-pane rained on to the desk. Bilvidic shouted to us to get down. But Ed was standing dazed in front of the desk with blood welling from a cut on the side of his head and trickling down his face. He turned slowly to the shattered window. A big, wild-eyed man was staring at us, a

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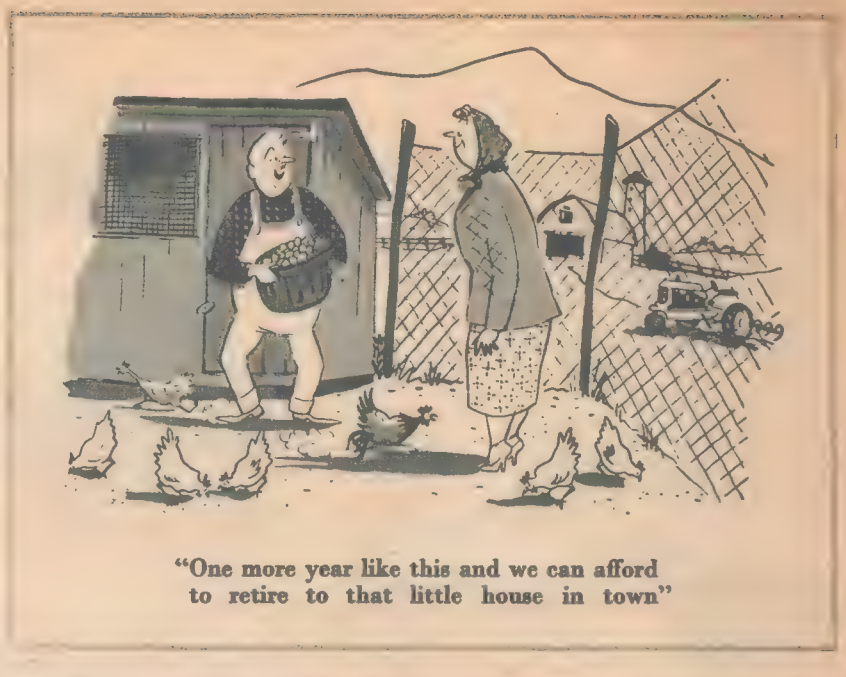

"One more year like this and we can afford to retire to that little house in town"

long-barrelled gun smoking in his hand.

Ed grabbed at his automatic.

"Don't fire!" Bilvidic screamed at him. "For God's sake don't fire!"

For an awful moment there was a stillness in the room. Then Ed lowered the gun. "He tried to kill me," he said in a dazed voice.

Bilvidic wiped the sweat from his forehead. "If you had fired," he said slowly in a small, quiet voice, "the lust for blood would have entered into that mob out there. You would have been committing suicide—for yourself and for all of us." He turned to me. "You take his gun, monsieur; and get him upstairs out of sight."

I took his arm quickly while he was still dazed, and took him upstairs, and handed him over to Julie. Fortunately it was only a superficial cut from a piece of flying glass and it had missed his eye.

I went over to the window and looked out at the crowd. They were like cattle, bawling and milling around, waiting to stampede. And then suddenly, above the solid, heavy roar came a liquid sound, an ululation made with the tongue like a yodel. It was just a little sound at first, but it swelled rapidly, a female sound that swamped the male.

My blood ran cold, for I knew that sound. I had heard it in the High Atlas. But then it had been a greeting, a ceremonial welcome. Now I was hearing it for the first time as I had been told it was really used: to drive the men to a frenzy of excitement, to goad them into battle.

I turned then and ran down the stairs.

"Where are you going?" cried Julie.

I didn't answer her. I think I was too scared of what I knew had to be done to say anything. But she seemed to sense what was in my mind, for she came after me. "No, Philip, no." She caught hold of my arm. "Please."

Bilvidic met me at the foot of the stairs. His face looked very pale and he had his gun in his hand. "You can give the American back his gun," he said.

"You know that sound, then?" I asked.

"I know what it means—yes. But it is the first time I have heard it." He smiled a little wryly. "Get your men down here. The ladies should remain upstairs. We may beat back the first rush. After that. . . ." He shrugged his shoulders.

Ed came down the stairs then, his face very pale under the bloodstained bandage. I stared out of the window at the gathering men standing silent, staring at the door. That throbbing, tongued cry of the women seemed to fill the air.

"You understand mobs," I said, turning to Bilvidic. "There must be something that would stop them?"

"Yes," he said, his pale eyes staring into mine. "If I went out there and faced them and told them why their men had been killed in the gorge—that would stop them."

"Then why don't you do it?" Julie said quickly, breathlessly.

"Because, mademoiselle, I do not speak Berber, only Arabic, and the mass of them would not understand that." His eyes came back to me and I knew he was thinking that I must speak Berber since I'd been a missionary at Enfida.

"That's what I thought you'd say." I turned and walked towards the door.

Julie caught my arm. "You mustn't, Philip. Not alone. Not like that."

"I must." I was trembling and my stomach felt cold and empty.

"I won't let you." She was dragging at my arm.

"Let me go!" I cried.

"I won't!" Her face was white and her dark eyes looked at me with a steady gaze. "I love you, Philip."

I stared at her and a sudden glow of warmth filled me. It was as though her declaration had set light to something inside me. I felt suddenly calm and at peace. Gently, I released her fingers from my arm.

"You'd better have this," I said, and handed her Legard's pistol. And then I walked to the door and opened it and went out into the hard sunlight and the noise to face the stare of a thousand hostile, half-animal eyes.

They were bunched about fifty feet back from the house, a compact, solid mass of men that thinned out towards the edges, spreading in a crescent round the house as though formed by instinct into some old order of battle. I was not conscious of their individual faces. They were just a blur in the hot sunlight, a solid mass of flowing robes that ranged from white to brown and matched the arid sand. I was only conscious that they were of this naked land, a living and integral part of it, and that I was an alien.

I was afraid; desperately, horribly afraid. My mouth felt dry and there was a weakness in the marrow of my bones. I prayed God to stop me being afraid. But the prayer was not a real prayer, and I stopped and looked at that sea of faces.

For a moment I could say nothing, petrified almost with fear. And suddenly it maddened me. I was angry, with myself and with them, and my anger killed my fear.

I found my voice then and heard myself shout at them for silence in their own language. I shouted several times for the women to be quiet, and gradually the sound lessened and died away.

Abruptly, the silence was complete, the whole crowd of them so still that I could hear the small sound of the breeze blowing through the dark green sprays of the tamarisks that acted as a windbreak for the house.

I had them then. I could have talked to them. But my eye was caught by one individual face. It was the bearded, wild-eyed face of the man who had fired into the study. He was standing right in front of me and as our eyes

met, I was conscious of the hatred and violence that seethed inside him. He had his gun clutched in his left hand and with his right he pointed a finger at me. He cursed me in the name of Allah.

"You have killed my son and my brother and my brother's son," he accused me.

"I have not killed anyone," I said. "The men who came to Kasbah Foum died because of Ali d'Es-Skhira."

I began to tell them exactly what had happened there in the gorge. But in spite of myself I found I was speaking to this one man and not to the whole crowd, and I saw his face become set and wooden as he made himself deaf to what I was saying.

He shifted the gun to his right hand and raised it to his shoulder, so that the long, heavy barrel pointed at me. I tried to ignore him. I tried to look at the sea of faces, to talk to them as to one composite individual. But my eyes were fascinated by the round hole of that barrel. His eyes were focusing on me, and I could not hold my composure any longer.

I ducked, flinging myself sideways. There was a report and the bullet hit my shoulder, spinning me round. Somehow I kept my feet. Pain shot through my arm and my whole body seemed to grow numb with shock. I could feel blood flowing. I could feel, too, the blood lust of that crowd growing.

What came to me then, I don't know. I would like to think that it was courage. But it may only have been the instinct of survival, the knowledge that if I failed to face them now, they would charge and trample me underfoot. I felt suddenly quite cool and a little light-headed, and I was walking towards them.

I WALKED straight towards the man who had fired at me, never shifting my gaze from his face. His eyes stared back at me for a moment and then he looked down. He began to back away from me. The crowd opened up, so that a narrow gully formed in the mass of it. I walked straight into it. They could have killed me then with their bare hands, but nobody moved.

The man backed until he could retreat no farther. He was held there by the weight of the people behind. I walked straight up to him, took his gun from him, and turned my back and walked out till I was clear of them.

The concrete signpost stood at the entrance to the house. I swung the gun by the barrel and brought the breech down across the post, using all the strength of my sound arm, and the stock splintered and broke off. I tossed the useless thing on to the sand and walked down the path and in through the open door of the house.

In the sudden shade of the room I could see nothing. I felt my brain reeling. I heard a murmur like surf as the crowd gave voice to its reaction, and the door closed, shutting it out. A hand touched mine. I heard a sob. And then my legs gave under me and I passed out.

When I came to, I was lying on the couch. There were voices talking. "But there must be troops down here." It was Ed speaking. "How else would you hold the country?"

"I tell you, there is none nearer than Boumalne." Bilvidic's voice sounded cold and angry. "That is more than a hundred and fifty kilometres away."

I was conscious of somebody close beside me. Fingers gripped hold of my arm and there was a stinging pain in the wound half-way between elbow and shoulder.

I cried out, more with surprise than with pain, and Julie's voice, close by my ear, said, "I'm sorry. I thought you were still unconscious. There's no damage. It's just a flesh wound, and I'm swabbing it out with iodine. The bullet nicked your arm." Her voice was cool and soothing.

"I lost my nerve," I said.

"Don't be silly." She gripped the arm as she began to bandage it.

But I was remembering how I had ducked and the man had fired. "If I'd walked straight up to him he'd

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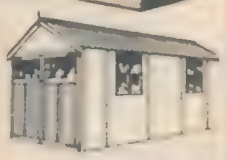

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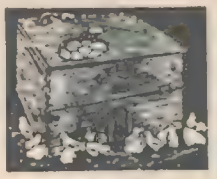

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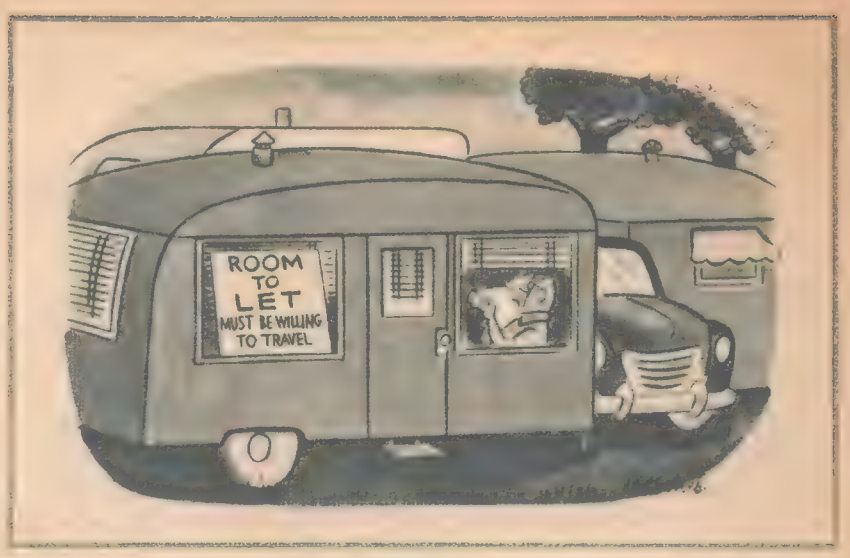

never have fired. I let him dominate me." My voice sounded shaky.

The others crowded round me, salving my wounded pride with kind words. "It requires courage, *mon ami*, to face a mob like that," Bilvidic said. There was a warmth in his voice that soothed me, but I had a feeling that if he'd been the one who had spoken Berber, he would have outfaced them.

As soon as Julie had finished bandaging my arm, I sat up. "What's happening outside?" I asked.

"It's all right," Jan said. "They've split up into groups."

"*C'est ça,*" Bilvidic said. "You have given them something to talk about. For a moment they are no longer a mob. I do not think they will do anything. Not during the day."

"And afterwards?" I asked.

"Afterwards. . . ." He spread his hands with a Gallic shrug. "Afterwards, we shall see. I think we should eat now."

We split into two watches, one half on guard, the other half eating. The time passed slowly. We dared not go out of the house and, it seemed, the mob dared not attack it. We played through all Legard's records on the gramophone, opening the windows so that the people outside could hear our music and would know that we weren't afraid.

By midday the crowd had thinned to no more than a few hundred, who sat or lay stretched out quite peacefully on the sand. We had lunch and played cards. It was cool in the house, but we could feel the heat outside—the heat and the stillness.

Later, the drums started again, coming faintly across the sands from Foum-Skhira. And almost immediately that harsh, wailing chant of the women took up the rhythm. *Ayee-ya-i-ee Ayee-ya-i-ee.*

Georges called down the stairs then. He was acting as lookout on the roof. "There are some riders coming in now," he said.

"Troops?" Jan asked hopefully.

"No. Berbers on mules."

We went to the windows. They were riding in across the open space between the forts, their robes billowing out behind them.

They paused to speak with some of the people squatting on the sand. Then they rode on towards Foum-Skhira.

"I guess those are the guys that passed me up on the mountain road last night," Ed said.

"It is possible." Bilvidic was staring through the windows towards the *palmerie*. Then he turned, abruptly. "Georges. Go back to the roof. Watch the *palmerie*."

"*Oui, oui. Ça va.*" His assistant hurried back up the stairs.

"Let us continue our game of cards," Bilvidic said, and took up his hand again.

But we couldn't concentrate any more. The drums were beating faster now and the sound, though faint, seemed to throb through the room. It was nearly four.

"I'm going to make some coffee," Julie said. Her voice sounded small and taut. She and Karen went out together into the kitchen.

We sat and listened to the drums. "It won't be long now," Jan murmured. He rubbed his hand across his face. "It's funny," he said to me, speaking softly. "For more than five years I have been wishing for Karen to be with me. And now. . . ." He looked across at Bilvidic, who had joined Ed at the window. "Are you married?" Jan asked him.

Bilvidic nodded. "Yes, and I have two children also—a boy aged eleven and a girl of nine."

"I'm sorry," Jan said.

Bilvidic's face softened into a friendly smile. "It does not matter. It is my work. There is always danger. The boy, François, is in France now. He has gone to stay with his grandmother for the New Year."

The drums were growing louder and a moment later Georges called down that the mob was coming out of the *palmerie*. Bilvidic muttered a curse as we went towards the windows.

The mob looked different this time. It may have been the slant of the sun, or it may have been the fact that they were led by a man on mule-back, but they seemed to have more purpose, to be no longer leaderless.

"There is going to be trouble this time." Bilvidic turned to the stairs. "Georges! Can you see anything moving on the *piste* from Agdz?"

"No, nothing. *Un moment.* Yes, I think so. Just one man; riding a mule, I think." Presumably it was a straggler from the party which had already arrived.

"*Ecoutez!*" Bilvidic said. "There is to be no shooting. You understand? No shooting. We retreat up the stairs and then up to the roof. Only then do we fight. As long as there is no shooting we have a chance."

Julie came in with the coffee. We drank it scalding hot, conscious of the growing murmur of the advancing mob.

There was no hesitation this time. The mob came straight on towards the house. Knives flashed in the sunshine as they neared the house. Several men carried swords and one a lance. There were guns, too. The leader trotted his mule up to the door and shouted, "Give us the man who killed Ali. Give us the slayers of the men in the gorge." He was a tall, bearded man with aquiline features.

"Get up the stairs," Bilvidic said to me. And when I hesitated, he added, "There is nothing you can do to stop them this time. Get upstairs. Georges and I will hold them. Take everybody up to the roof. Hurry, monsieur."

The man was looking in at us now. He shouted something and then his face vanished abruptly. The next instant a lump of concrete was flung with a crash through the window. He was screaming at the crowd and they answered with a deep, baying roar, split by wild cries as they swarmed forward.

"Up the stairs, all of you," Bilvidic shouted.

We backed away across the room. I

motioned Jan and Ed to go on ahead. The two Frenchmen were also backing across the room, their guns in their hands. The tide of the Berber mob rolled against the house, breaking against it, lapping round it. Windows crashed in, the frames splintering under heavy blows. Men climbed through, over the sills. The door fell open with a crash. The room was suddenly full of them.

Bilvidic and Georges were in the archway between the main room and the study. The Berbers, finding themselves in unfamiliar surroundings, hesitated—uncertain and suspicious, like animals. They stood, silent and baffled, facing the two Frenchmen. Their momentary stillness was full of fear.

Then the study windows were broken in and Bilvidic was forced to move back to the stairs. The tribesmen thrust forward, milling into the alcove between the two rooms. A gun was fired and a bullet slapped the wall above our heads. Bilvidic was backing steadily. It was only a matter of time.

A ladder led from the top storey on to the flat roof. Karen went up and then Jan and then Ed. Julie waited for me. We were alone on the landing with the guttural jabber of the Berbers lapping the house. She was looking up at me and my grip on her hand tightened. And then suddenly she was in my arms and our lips touched, a kiss that was without passion, that was a physical expression of what we were feeling for each other, of the love we had found.

SUDDENLY the door behind us was flung open and crashed to again as Bilvidic and Georges thrust their shoulders against it and turned the key.

"*Montez! Montez!*" Bilvidic shouted. "Up on to the roof. Quick!"

I pushed Julie up and followed quickly after her. And as my head emerged into the slanting sunlight, I heard Jan shouting excitedly.

Georges followed me and then Bilvidic. The noise of the mob milling round the house was terrifying. A gun fired and a bullet whined over our heads. I pulled Julie down. Bilvidic and Georges were hauling up the ladder while blows rained on the door they had locked against pursuit. It splintered and burst open, and at the same moment they dropped the trap door leading on to the roof.

And then I heard what Jan was shouting. "Look, Philip! Look!"

I lifted my head above the parapet. A lone horseman was galloping across the open space between the two forts. It was a French officer. He rode bent low over the horse's neck, his round, pale blue hat screening his face, his cloak streaming out behind him. The horse, a big black, was lathered white with sweat and dust.

The roar of voices that circled the house gradually died as the horse, almost foundering, was pulled up on the very edge of the mob around the front door.

"Abdul! Hassan!" The rider had singled out two men from the mob and ordered them to take charge and clear the crowd from the doorway. "You—Mohammed. Drop that gun!"

It was Legard. His body sagged with exhaustion, his eyes blazed with tiredness. His horse could barely stand. Yet he and the horse moved into the mob as though they were reviewing troops on parade. Here and there he singled out a man and gave an order.

In a moment the mob was moving back away from the house. They were going sheepishly, their eyes turned away from the *capitaine*. They were like children and he scolded them like children. "Moha! Why are you not looking to your goats? Abdul! You should be teaching the children today. Youssef! Mohammed!"

He picked them out, one by one, riding his horse in among them. He seemed to know them all by name and what they should be doing. And at no time was his voice raised in anger. It was only pained.

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food for you, and now you have brought me back."

He knew them all and they ducked past him, their heads bowed in respect and contrition. "*Llah ihennik, O Sidi*—Allah keep you in peace, O Master." And they scuttled away in ones and twos, like whipped dogs.

One by one, the men who had invaded the house came out, and Legard sat his horse, watching them—and to them he said nothing. They murmured their greetings, grovelling before his sternness, and then slunk away.

The last to come out was the man who had been their leader. He stood for a moment facing Legard. Neither spoke and the man's head dropped and he ran quickly to his mule.

We rigged the ladder then and went down. Legard was standing in the door of the house surveying the wreckage. He looked at us in silence. I saw that it wasn't only the dust of travel that made his face grey. He looked desperately ill. His eyes glittered as they fastened on us.

"Imbeciles!" he cried, his voice savage with anger. "You are here two days and you cause trouble." He began to cough. "My relief has arrived and now I have to come here and deal with this. All because of you, because you are so stupid that you. . . ." His words were lost in a fit of coughing. He staggered forward to the settee and collapsed into it, clutching at his stomach, his eyes half-closed. "See to my horse," he croaked. "Somebody see to that poor devil of a horse." He began to cough again.

Bilvidic sent Georges out to look after the animal. "What can I do for him?" Julie whispered.

"Get him some water," I said. I went over to him. "*Monsieur le Capitaine*," I said. "I'd like to thank you—from us all."

His eyes stared at me coldly.

"I'd like to thank you, too," Ed said. "But why the hell did you have to come alone?" he added. "What happened to the troops?"

"What troops?" Legard asked harshly.

Ed turned to Bilvidic. "Didn't the Commandant promise to send troops?"

"Why should he?" Legard pushed himself angrily up on to his elbow. "What did you want troops for? These men aren't vicious. They're like little children. Anyway, there aren't any troops. We have no troops down here."

JULIE brought him the water and he gulped it down. "*Alors.*" He pushed himself up into a sitting position. "Now explain to me everything that has happened. I have already sent for Caid Hassan and for the Khalifa. What happened?"

"Caid Hassan is dead," I said.

"Yes, of course. I had forgotten." He closed his eyes, screwing them up as though they were still half-blinded by sun and sand. "It is a pity. He was a fine old man." He pressed his fingers against the balls of his eyes and then got to his feet with an abrupt, determined movement. "Bilvidic. A word with you, please." The two men went through into the study, and a sudden, uneasy stillness descended upon the room.

Mohammed came in, his sandals slapping the tiles as he crossed the room. He went into the study and announced that the Khalifa and the old Caid's son had arrived.

"Tell them to wait for me at the Bureau," Legard said, and Mohammed went out again.

The stillness of the room became unbearable. Ed walked over to the window and stared out towards the mountains. "Well, that's that, I guess. That shaft will never be opened up now. All that work for nothing."

"You mean you're giving up?" Jan sounded surprised.

Ed turned towards him with a quick, irritable movement. "What else can I do? I can't clear that slide away. There's too much of it."

"We know the position of the shaft. We could tunnel down to it."

"How? I've no equipment and I'm just about broke."

"We could use local labour. As for

OH, JOHNNY! *by TIM*

money, there's the insurance on your bulldozers."

"They weren't insured. I didn't think there was any reason to insure them."

The study curtains were pulled aside and Legard and Bilvidic came out. "I will arrange for the mules to be ready at nine," Legard said. "*Ça va?*"

Bilvidic nodded. Legard picked his blue stiff hat up off the table where he had flung it and slung his cape round his shoulders. As he went towards the door, he paused and looked at Jan. "At least, Monsieur, you seem to have succeeded in carrying out Duprez's wishes." He stared at him for a moment, and then he was gone.

The sun had set now and night was closing in. The lamps were lit, but even in the soft glow the room had a cold, alien look. The sense of tension was still there.

And then the telephone buzzer sounded. Bilvidic went through into the study to answer it. He was gone a long while and when he came back he paused in the archway between the two rooms. He was looking at Jan. "Monsieur Wade. You will please come through into the study. There are some questions I have to ask you. You, too, Latham," he added, turning to me.

The moment I had been dreading had arrived. I pulled myself to my feet. Jan was already following Bilvidic into the study. Karen was staring after him, her body rigid, her face pale and taut with strain. Her small hands were clenched as though she were trying to will with all the strength of her body that everything would be all right.

I went through into the study, conscious that my footsteps sounded very loud on the bare tiles. Bilvidic was already seated at the desk.

"*Asseyez-vous, monsieur.*" He waved me to a chair. "That telephone call was from Casablanca. I have orders to phone through a preliminary report on this matter to my headquarters tonight." He pulled out a packet of cigarettes and lit one. "Monsieur Wade. From the time you entered French Morocco until I confronted you with Madame Kavan you had assumed the name and identity of Dr. Kavan. Why? Explain, please."

Jan's hands gripped the arms of his chair and his body was braced. "Because I had to," he said. "Kostos had taken my passport. But I still had Kavan's papers and I had to get to Kasbah Foum." His voice sounded nervous.

"Why did you not report the loss of your passport to the authorities? The International Police were the proper people to deal with the matter."

"But that would have taken time." Jan leaned forward and the nervousness was suddenly gone from his voice. "I was with Kavan over two weeks in the confined space of a small boat. He told me the whole story — how Duprez had given him the deeds and had made him promise to get his title to Kasbah Foum confirmed before Caid Hassan died. If he didn't, the property, with all its potential wealth, would have passed to Ali."

"Nevertheless," Bilvidic said, "you should have reported the loss of your passport to the police."

"Damn it, man—don't you understand?" Jan's anger was genuine. "Kostos was waiting for me there on the beach at Tangier. The matter was urgent. Latham understood. That was why he agreed to get me out on Kavan's papers."

"Very well, monsieur. It is understood. But why do you have to go on calling yourself Kavan?"

"What else was I to do? I was here in Morocco on Kavan's papers. Besides, Caid Hassan wouldn't have confirmed the title to anyone but Kavan."

"Ah. That is the real point, eh?" There was a cold glint in Bilvidic's eyes. "You had to be Kavan in order to obtain the title to Kasbah Foum."

"Are you suggesting I arranged for Kostos to steal my passport?" Jan demanded. "Do you think I enjoyed getting out of Tangier the way I did and coming down here under an assumed name? It was dangerous. But I had to do it." He got up suddenly and walked over to the desk, leaning on it and staring down at Bilvidic. "What you're implying is a motive of personal gain. What you should be considering is the alternative. Your troops are all fighting in Indo-China. Caid Hassan is dead, and if Ali were now alive and the owner of Kasbah Foum. . . ." He thrust his head forward slightly, staring at Bilvidic. "Be thankful, monsieur, that it has turned out the way it has. If there is silver there, then it will be developed for the benefit of the people. It was what Kavan wanted. It is what I promised Caid Hassan."

THERE was silence. Bilvidic drew on his cigarette, then he nodded. "Perhaps you will go and join the others now," he said to Jan. "I would like a word with Latham alone."

Jan hesitated, glancing at me. He looked tired. Then he turned without a word, and went out.

I moved uneasily in my chair, turning to face Bilvidic. He was watching me, his cigarette held vertical between two fingers and a thumb. "How is the shoulder?" he asked. "Painful?"

"A little."

His face softened to a smile and he offered me a cigarette. "There are one or two questions I would like to ask you. First, who suggested that method of getting him out of the International Zone—you or he?"

"I did."

He nodded. "That is what I thought. I have seen your security report. Perhaps you have had previous experience of that method, eh?"

"Perhaps," I said.

He shrugged his shoulders. "Well, that is for Tangier to worry about. Now, this matter of Kavan being lost overboard from the yacht. Did our friend tell you how it happened?"

"Yes." I explained when he had told me, and he nodded. "Good. Repeat it to me in the exact words he used, as far as you can remember."

I did so, and he sat for a long time, tapping his pencil against his teeth.

"And you are satisfied?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Very well." He stood up abruptly. "Now I will see Wade again." He smiled suddenly.

"I think, perhaps, Latham, you would be more comfortable in the other room. Keep warm by the fire."

Julie and Karen were still standing by the hearth. There was no one else in the room. The lamps and the fire gave a glow of warmth to the bare walls. Karen turned and moved slowly, almost reluctantly, to meet me. "Is it all right?" she whispered.

"Yes," I said. "I think so."

Her lips trembled slightly and then she turned away her head. I think she was close to tears. Julie's fingers closed on my hand. "You're cold," she said. "Come and get warm."

Ed came into the room soon after and we sat and waited in silence. It seemed a long time before Jan came out. He was talking to Bilvidic. "And you'll make it clear that I had no alternative, won't you?"

"I don't think you need worry," Bilvidic answered.

"Thanks. And I'm glad you reminded me about the yacht." He came towards us then, and he was smiling.

"Monsieur White." Bilvidic's cold, official voice cut across the mood of relief that had filled the room. "I would like a short statement from you."

ED went into the study and as the curtains fell to behind him, Jan came towards Karen. "Well, madame." For the first time since I had known him I saw him completely relaxed. His blue eyes were twinkling. He looked young, almost a boy again.

"It's all right then?" Karen whispered.

"Yes," he said. "Everything is going to be all right now—for always, darling." Their hands touched and gripped. "You understand, Karen," he said. "We shall have to start courting again. After a decent interval, of course." And then he turned to me. "Philip. You will be best man at our wedding, eh?" He was suddenly laughing. "Tell me. What is it, the opposite to your saying—'It never rains but it pours'?"

But he didn't wait for an answer. "Listen. *Gay Juliet* was insured for £15,000. As Wade, I collect that money. Isn't it damn funny?" His laugh was a little nervous, as though it were all too good to be true. "You come and help us open up that shaft, and after that we'll do something about your mission."

The door opened behind us and Jan and Karen moved quickly apart. It was Legard. He put his cloak and his hat on the table and then came over to the fire. He stood warming himself for a moment and then he turned to Jan. "I have been talking to Caid Hassan's son," he said. "He was present at your meeting with his father." He paused and then added significantly. "He speaks French."

The sudden look of shock on Jan's face showed me that he had understood the implication.

Legard stared at the fire for a long time and then he gave a little shrug. "*Eh bien*," he said. "Perhaps, if you stay here long enough, you will cure me of the *amibe*, eh?"

He looked at Jan, his tough leathery face unsmiling—but the corners of his eyes were crinkled up. Then he walked to the door and shouted for Mohammed to bring him some water.

THE END

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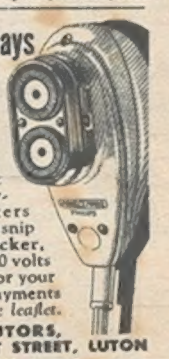

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